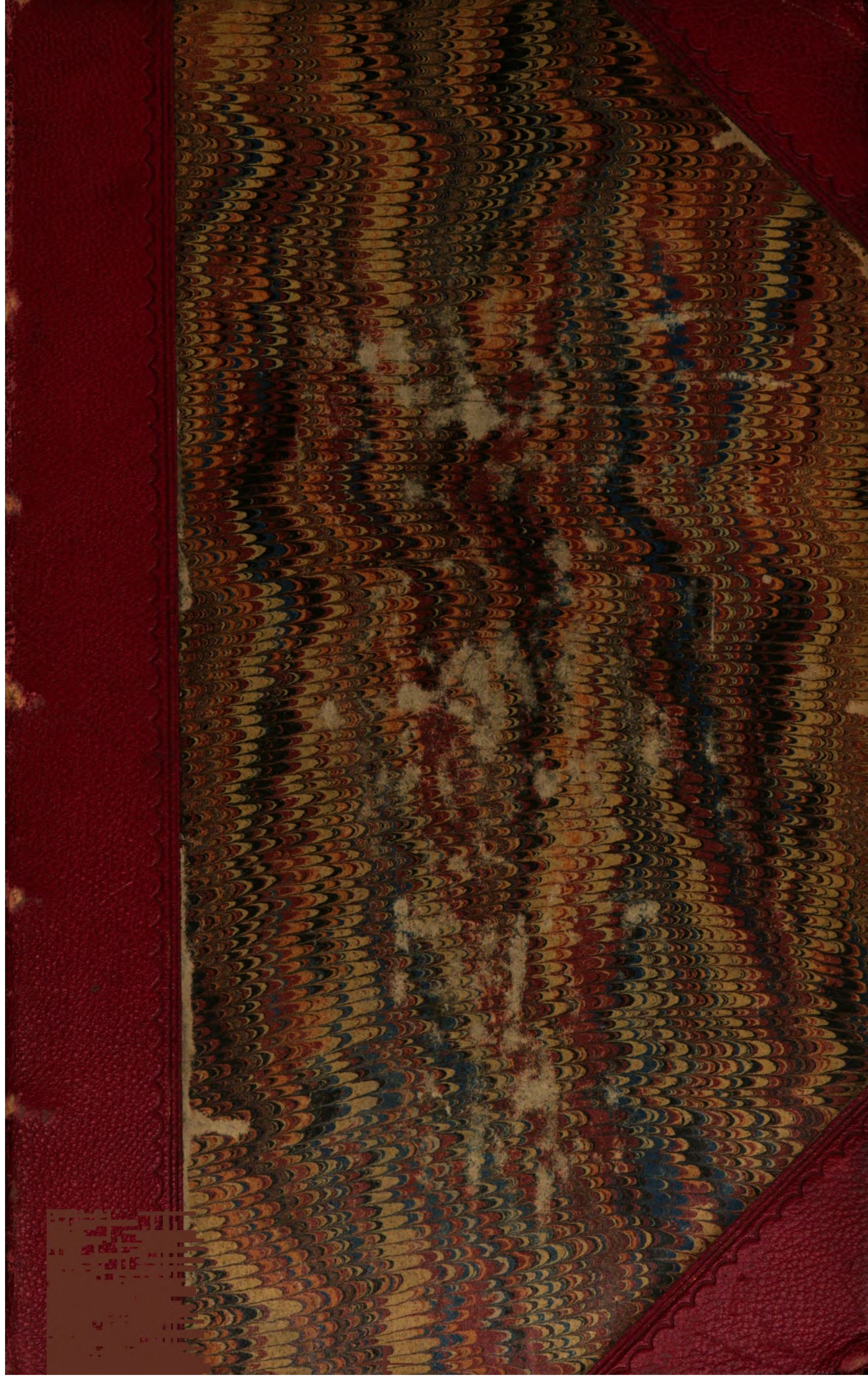






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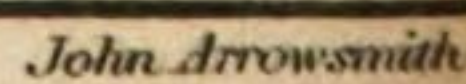








1837.





THE  
E A S T E R N S E A S,

OR

VOYAGES AND ADVENTURES

IN THE

INDIAN ARCHIPELAGO,

IN

1832-33-34,

COMPRISING

A TOUR OF THE ISLAND OF JAVA—VISITS TO BORNEO, THE MALAY  
PENINSULA, SIAM, &c.;

ALSO

AN ACCOUNT OF THE PRESENT STATE

OF

SINGAPORE,

WITH

OBSERVATIONS ON THE COMMERCIAL RESOURCES OF THE  
ARCHIPELAGO.

---

By GEORGE WINDSOR EARL,  
M.R.A.S.

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LONDON:

W M. H. ALLEN AND CO.  
LEADENHALL STREET.

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1837.

Wb/66/310



THE  
EASTERN

VOYAGES AND ADVENTURES

INDIAN ARCHITECTURE

1833-34

CONTAINING

A TOUR OF THE ISLAND OF LAY--LISTS OF BUILDINGS, THE MOUNTAINS

Bayerische  
Staatsbibliothek  
München

AN ACCOUNT OF THE PRESENT STATE

SINGAPORE

WITH

AN ACCOUNT OF THE COMMERCE, RESOURCES, &c.

ARCHITECTURE.

BY GEORGE WILKINSON ESQ.

LONDON: 1834.

THE

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LONDON:

Printed by J. L. Cox and Sons, 75, Great Queen Street,  
Lincoln's-Inn Fields.

1834



TO  
**DR. JOSÉ D'ALMEIDA,**  
OF SINGAPORE,

WHOSE KINDNESS AND LIBERALITY ARE SO WIDELY ACKNOWLEDGED

BY THE

NUMEROUS TRAVELLERS WHO HAVE BEEN WELCOMED

UNDER HIS HOSPITABLE ROOF,

THE FOLLOWING WORK

*Is Inscribed*

AS A

TRIBUTE OF GRATITUDE AND A MEMORIAL OF ESTEEM,

BY HIS SINCERE FRIEND

THE AUTHOR.



TO

DR. JOSE D. A. M. D. A.

OF SINGAPORE.

WHOSE FIDELITY AND DISCRETION ARE SO WIDELY RECOGNIZED.

AND

STATIONER OF SINGAPORE WHO HAS BEEN APPOINTED

TO BE A MEMBER OF THE BOARD

THE FOLLOWING WORK

Is Submitted

FOR THE CONSIDERATION AND A DECISION BY THE

OF THE SINGAPORE BOARD

THE AUTHOR



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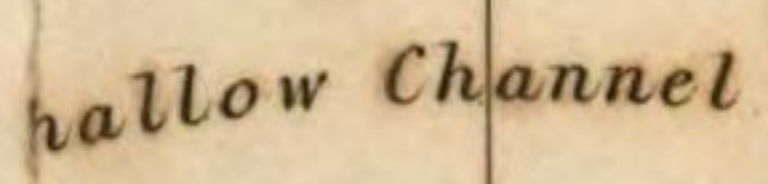
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Shallow Channel

Village

tion

angan

Island

John Arrowsmith



# VOYAGES AND ADVENTURES,

&c. &c.

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British Landed Proprietors.

ON the 5th August 1832, after a stay of several months at Fremantle, Western Australia, I embarked for Java, on board the Dutch schooner *Monkey*, and sailed in the evening. On the fol-



lowing day, the wind, which had been increasing during the night, freshened to a gale from the westward, which continued for three days, bringing us to the limits of the south-east trade wind, and whence we carried a steady and favourable breeze during the remainder of the passage.

The schooner, which was only fifty tons burthen, had been originally a Dutch gun-boat, purchased from the Batavian government by the commander, an Englishman, who was the only European on board besides myself; the whole of the crew being natives of Eastern India. The cook and the steward were Chinese, and the serang or boatswain, together with several of the seamen, natives of Java and Madura; but although they were all considered as Malays by Europeans, there was not one genuine Malay among them. The best seamen in the vessel consisted of an intelligent Bugis of Celebes, and a wide-mouthed good-humoured native of the island of Sumbawa, said by his shipmates to have been a man-eater; the accusation, however, was indignantly repelled by the individual in question, although he acknowledged that some of the mountaineers of his native island occasionally made a dinner of each other.



The poor fellows had all suffered severely from the cold weather, which prevailed during their stay at Swan River; and they, of course, rejoiced at their return to the mild climate to which they had been previously accustomed. At the commencement of the voyage I had felt inclined to think them morose and sulky; but when we entered the tropics, their increasing liveliness and gaiety proved that their previous dulness had been the result of circumstances.

Voyaging within the influence of the trade winds is always more tedious than in higher latitudes, as in the latter the variable breezes create a constant excitement; for when the wind is fair, it is the more valued from the uncertainty which exists as to its duration, and when contrary, a favourable change is anxiously looked for. In the trades, however, where the breeze continues steady for days, or even weeks together, so that an alteration in the arrangement of the sails is rarely required, there can be little or no excitement of any kind; and then more than at any other time some occupation becomes necessary to beguile the tedium. I was fortunate in having ample employment, for, as I purposed to remain two or three years in the Indian Archipelago, my leisure was chiefly occu-



pied in gaining an acquaintance with the Malay language\* from the native seamen; and I was enabled to devote the greater attention to this study from having no other amusement, for my books had all been perused and reperused during my three years' absence from England, and the schooner's library contained only a Nautical Almanack, Norie's Navigation, and Horsburgh's Sailing Directory.

As we neared the Island of Java, the prevailing easterly winds, assisted by a strong current, prevented our reaching the Strait of Bali, through which we had intended to pass into the Java sea. On the 20th of August the alteration in the colour of the water, and the disappearance of the flying fish, gave notice of our approach to the land, and shortly afterwards the high land of Java was indistinctly visible through the haze. We immediately bore up and sailed along-shore to the westward, and when the mist cleared off in the afternoon, the shore was perceived within a short

\* The Malay language is generally understood by the maritime population of the Archipelago, where it forms the "Lingua Franca," the language of commerce. Those who propose a visit to this interesting portion of the world, will be glad to learn that, from its simplicity and smoothness, it is to be acquired with greater facility, probably, than any other tongue.



distance. It was lined by a range of hills which sloped gently down to the beach, the sides being for the most part covered with trees, but in many places patches of considerable extent were cleared and cultivated. A high peaked mountain rose up at the back of the hills, and on referring to the chart, I was surprised to find that it was fifty miles inland, for it appeared to be much nearer.

I was highly delighted with my first view of Java, and wished that at some future period I might be enabled to visit this portion of the country; but as I was informed that the Dutch permitted no intercourse with the south coast of the island, even by their own merchant ships, I could entertain a very faint hope that my wish would be gratified before I left the island: a circumstance the more pleasing, from its being unexpected.

Our usual quietude was interrupted during the afternoon by a difference of opinion between the cook and the steward. We had heard them for some time haranguing each other in their barbarous Tartar dialect, but supposing that it was only an argument respecting the propriety of boiling a yam with or without the skin, or some discussion of equal moment, we paid little attention to it. A



scuffle however reaching our ears shortly afterwards, we were led to believe that the "argumentum ad hominem" had been resorted to, and on hastening to the fore-castle, we found it to be the case, for the two Chinese were rolling on the deck engaged in mortal strife, each having fast hold of his opponent's pig-tail, and both tugging with all their might, until their eyes appeared ready to start from their sockets. They jumped on their feet when we approached, and the steward, a tall, sedate-looking personage, appeared greatly shocked at being discovered in a situation so incompatible with his usual dignity. He pointed at his opponent, and after several vain attempts to articulate (his breath having been expended in the late struggle,) at last uttered with a voice of horror, "theifo he,"\* and we were rather surprised to find that all this disturbance had been caused by the cook having embezzled and applied to his own use half of the last coco-nut, which had been carefully preserved by the steward to aid the concocting of a currie for our dinner on making the land.

I take pleasure in recording that this steward was what is rarely to be met with among his countrymen, an honest man, and he was also a

\* The Chinese English for "he is a thief."



remarkably attentive servant. He had resided two or three years with an English gentleman on the Cocos, a group of small islands in the Indian ocean, during which time he had acquired, as he thought, a perfect knowledge of the English language, but from the extraordinary simplicity to which he had reduced it, his speech was not always intelligible. For instance, when informing us that breakfast, dinner, or tea, were ready, he would make the same expressions, with very little alteration, answer for each. These were respectively, "fish lelly," "dish lelly," and "tish lelly," none of which, it must be confessed, bear any remarkable resemblance to the originals.

We now continued along the south coast of the island, and early in the morning of the 24th, passed Pulo Klappa, a small low island, entirely covered with coco-nut trees, when we steered for the strait which divides Prince's Island from the main land of Java. Although the strait is only a few miles long, we did not pass through it until the next day, and in the evening of the 27th the schooner was anchored off the little town of Anjer, which is situated on the north-west end of Java, near the narrowest part of the Straits of Sunda.



The following morning, as the captain was rather unwell, I went on shore in his place to ask permission from the Dutch commandant to fill up our water-casks, a courtesy expected from the commanders of ships touching here for the purpose. We entered a small creek, on the banks of which the bamboo houses of the natives were erected, and I landed among a group of the inhabitants, who were admiring the proportions of a new fishing prahu which had just been launched into the water, and she certainly appeared to be well adapted for fast sailing. The houses of the natives were low, and consisted generally of only two rooms. They were shaded by large trees, among which were many palms, and the general appearance of the scenery and people reminded me forcibly of paintings which I had seen of some of the South Sea Islands.

On landing I was accosted in tolerable English by an individual dressed in a shirt and native *sarong*, or petticoat, who enquired if he could be of any service to me, and on my informing him of the purport of my visit, he offered to conduct me to the commandant's quarters in the fort. From the dress of my companion, who proved to be the government secretary, I had at first taken him for



a native, but the information he displayed soon undeceived me, and I found that his costume was that usually adopted as a morning dress by the Europeans in Java. We found the commandant making preparations for his morning walk, and he immediately gave me the desired permission.

Anjer is scarcely of sufficient importance to be called a town, as there are no substantial houses excepting those within the fort, in which all the Europeans reside; the natives occupying the village on the banks of the creek. The fort consists of a quadrangle of about an acre, enclosed by banks of earth covered with turf, which are so thick and soft that a ball could not injure or penetrate them. Upon these outworks several guns are mounted, which protect the inhabitants from the piratical attacks of the natives of Sumatra, but cannot molest ships in passing the strait.

As the place possesses no trade, except in provisions for the refreshment of vessels, there are no merchants established in the settlement, so that it can only be considered as a military post.

The natives in the vicinity are descended from the Sumatran Malays, and do not much resemble the Javanese either in habits or appearance. They have no taste for agriculture, but prefer an irregular



mode of life, subsisting principally by fishing, and selling stock to the ships which pass through the Straits of Sunda. Refreshments are to be procured here cheaper than in any part of the Indian Archipelago, for the inhabitants of the neighbouring inland villages devote their whole time to rearing stock, and growing sweet potatoes, yams, and other vegetables.

On my arrival on board the schooner, I found her surrounded by small canoes, laden with turtle, ducks, fowls, cockatoos, monkies, and numbers of small animals and birds, which they expected to sell to some of the ships which might pass during the day. The captain had purchased several handsome Lampung monkies, which he intended to present to his friends at Sourabaya, where they are much valued, from the supposition that their presence in the stables will prevent sickness among the horses.

We weighed anchor with the sea-breeze in the afternoon, and proceeded on our voyage to Batavia. The wind soon fell light, and we made but little progress until towards midnight, when the land wind came off, bringing with it an aromatic smell of decaying vegetation, to which the ancient navigators probably alluded, when speaking of



the "spicy gales of India." It created a chilly, damp sensation, and was doubtless pregnant with malaria. The monsoon being now against us we made but little progress, for, during the night, when the wind generally became a little favourable, it was dangerous to get under weigh on account of the intricate navigation among the low islands and coral reefs.

On the 30th we passed Bantam, which town, from its having been so often mentioned by the English navigators, who first visited the Archipelago, is classic ground to a seaman. The foreign commerce formerly enjoyed by Bantam has been destroyed since the establishment of the Dutch at Batavia, and the town is now of no greater importance than the smallest residency on the coast.

The sea near Batavia is covered with innumerable little islets, all of which are clothed with luxuriant vegetation. Native prahus, with their yellow mat sails, are occasionally seen to shoot from behind one of them, to be shielded from view immediately afterwards by the green foliage of another; and over the tops of the trees may often be descried the white sails of some stately ship, threading the mazes of this little archi-



pelago. One group, appropriately named the Thousand Islands, has never yet been explored, and its intricacies afford concealment to petty pirates, who prey upon the small prahus and fishing-boats. We rounded Ontang Java point on the 2d of September, and bore up for Batavia roads, occasionally having a view of the shipping between the islands. A number of large fishing-boats were coming in from sea, and standing with us into the roads; and although we were running at the rate of seven knots an hour, they passed us with great rapidity. They had a most graceful appearance: many of them were fourteen or fifteen tons burthen, and each boat carried one immense square sail. As the breeze was strong, a thick plank was thrust out to windward for an out-rigger, on which several of the numerous crew sat, or stood, to prevent the press of sail they were carrying from capsizing the boat. They were occasionally hidden from our view by their passing behind some of the small islets; but in a few seconds they would appear on the other side, having shot past so rapidly, that we could scarcely fancy that we had lost sight of them at all.

We ran through the shipping, and anchored at five o'clock near the mouth of the river, and the



schooner was soon visited by a boat from the guard-ship, to make inquiries relative to the port from which we had arrived. We anchored too late in the afternoon to have any communication with the shore, and therefore amused ourselves while the daylight lasted in examining the ships in the roads with a telescope, for the town was nearly concealed from our view by the trees. The majority of the ships were Dutch ; but there were also several other flags flying, among which the stars and stripes of the United States were not the least numerous. The English ships, of which there were five or six, did not appear to advantage when compared with the handsome models of the Dutch Indiamen, the finest class of merchant vessels in the world.

After breakfast the next morning I accompanied Captain Pace to the town, being sheltered from the sun's rays by a canvas awning spread over the boat. The river is carried out about a mile into the sea between two piers, which have been erected for the purpose of contracting the current, so that it might acquire sufficient force to keep the channel clear of mud, as it would not otherwise have depth enough to afford entrance even to deeply laden boats. When we entered between the



piers, the boat's-crew jumped upon one of them with a rope, one end of which was fixed to the boat, to track it up the river, as the strength of the current is too great to permit the river to be ascended by means of oars alone.

The objects that met my view on our way to the town, were by no means calculated to give a favourable impression of the place. We first overtook a boat carrying three sick Europeans to the hospital, and a little farther we passed a large lighter, in which a number of native convicts were busily employed in clearing the mud from the bottom of the river. Many of them were heavily ironed, and being nearly naked and covered with mud, had a very unprepossessing appearance. A short distance below the town, a large alligator, of a light brown colour, was floating in the centre of the river devouring some garbage. He did not deem it necessary to move out of our way, and we passed close to him without interrupting his meal. The tameness of the alligators is accounted for by their being protected from injury by the authorities, as they devour the refuse of the slaughter-houses, which might otherwise be injurious to the health of the inhabitants. The natives appeared to have no fear of them, for



several children were bathing on the banks, near the spot where the monster was feeding. During the period of calm, which elapses between the land and sea breezes, the alligators sometimes take an excursion in the roads among the shipping, and as they are rarely seen when the sea breeze prevails, it is probable that they then retire into the river.

On arriving at the Boom or Custom-house, a large building immediately below the town, the boat was narrowly searched, and we then passed on to the principal part of the town, where a number of whitewashed brick houses, chiefly occupied as offices and warehouses by European merchants, were ranged along each bank of the river, fronted by rows of trees. We landed opposite to a large retail store, belonging to an Englishman, which I found was the rendezvous of all the English, who have an hour to throw away. A group of merchants and ship captains were conversing at the entrance of the store, many of whom greeted the captain as an old acquaintance. Under the trees in front of the store, a number of natives were lounging about, having poultry of all descriptions for sale, for which some of the ship captains were bargaining.



In the afternoon I accompanied a gentleman, to whom I had brought a letter of introduction, to his house, which was situated about six miles from Batavia. All the Europeans reside in the country; sleeping in the town even for a single night, exposed to the noxious vapours which rise from the swamp in which it is built, being almost certain to create a fever. We left town at four o'clock, in my friend's buggy or gig, drawn by a fast little Javanese horse. The first part of our journey lay over ground of a swampy nature, crossed by numerous water-courses; but after the first two miles the country became gradually more elevated. This being the dry season, the roads were in excellent condition, and they were rendered cool and pleasant by rows of trees planted on each side, as in the *boulevards* of Paris. We passed many handsome houses, situated in square enclosures or compounds,\* which were generally planted with shrubs, having a circular carriage drive, leading from the great gates to the door of the house, and arrived at my friend's residence at

\* This word, I imagine, is a corruption of the Malay *campung* or village, and probably alludes to the houses of the servants which are erected within the enclosure. It is applied in the same sense all over British India, where, however, it is supposed to be derived from the Portuguese word *Campania*.



five o'clock. Several neat, gaily dressed native servants were hastening to and fro from the house to the kitchen, and two gardeners were chasing a large cassowary round the compound, the bird having apparently ran away with something to which it had no right. We soon sat down to a sumptuous dinner of fish, flesh, and fowl of all descriptions, aided by numerous dainties in the shape of curries and stews. Some pine-apples, mangosteins, and other fruits were brought on table for the dessert, but I noticed that my host did not partake of any ; indeed they are all of so luscious a nature, that the palate soon tires of them, and longs for the fresh tartness of the apple and other European fruits.

The mode of life pursued by the European residents at Batavia is rather monotonous, but is easily supported by those who have great pecuniary advantages in view. Early rising is generally practised, the morning being by far the most agreeable part of the day. The time before breakfast is spent in riding or gardening, according to the taste of the individual, and after a substantial meal at eight o'clock, they repair to their town offices. At the conclusion of the business of the day they retire to their country houses to a five



o'clock dinner, and a drive round the suburbs occupies the interval between that repast and the closing-in of night, when they either return home or proceed to spend the evening at the Harmonie, an establishment formed upon the same principle as the large clubs of London, the majority of the European residents, Dutch and foreign, being members. The regulations are particularly favourable to strangers; a resident, who is not a member, cannot be admitted, but a visitor, after being introduced by a member, may resort to it whenever he pleases during his stay at Batavia. The evenings at the Harmonie are spent in conversation, or in playing at cards and billiards, and it is perhaps the more frequented by the gentlemen, from their having little intellectual amusement at home.

The greater number of the Dutch females have been born on the island, and are rather deficient in point of education. They are often remarkably fair, owing to their being seldom exposed to the weather: the heat of the climate renders them extremely listless, and they soon attain that *embonpoint* which we are apt to associate with the idea of Dutch beauty.

There are few public amusements. On Sunday evenings a military band performs on the



Koning's Plain, which attracts the residents, who attend in carriages or on horseback ; and the community is occasionally enlivened by an amateur play, or a grand ball given by one of the public functionaries. The annual races, which are always well attended, were established and are principally supported by the English. Some very good half-bred Arabs are occasionally run, but the race between the country horses, ridden by native jockeys, is by far the most amusing, and the riders jockey and are outjockeyed in a style that would not disgrace Newmarket.

The breed of the country horses is small, few being more than thirteen hands high. As all the Europeans dwell at some distance from the town, well-filled stables are absolutely necessary, and even the subordinate clerks in the government and mercantile offices possess at least three or four horses. The climate causes a great mortality among them, and their numbers require to be constantly filled up by others from the country. These are brought into the town in droves, and are sold at the rate of from £2 to £4 sterling each.

All the Europeans and creoles are enrolled in the *schuterij* or militia, of which there is an infantry and a cavalry regiment ; the greater part of



the English residents being in the latter. I went one morning to the Koning's Plain to see a troop go through its evolutions, and, for a volunteer corps, its performance, notwithstanding a few *contretemps*, was highly respectable. The line, however, was no sooner formed than it was thrown into confusion by a difference of opinion between a horse and its rider, and when the trumpet sounded the charge, several of the horses bolted, so that had there been an enemy in front, their riders would have found themselves in an embarrassing situation. The services of the *schuterij* would be found valuable in the event of an insurrection of the natives, of which the government is in constant dread.

The unfavourable nature of the climate of Batavia is well known, and it is justly dreaded, not only by Europeans, but by the natives of the island themselves. Why the Dutch should have fixed upon this spot for their seat of government, when so many others are to be found on the island in every respect superior, it is impossible to say, unless they chose it in the expectation that its climate would deter strangers from visiting it, or in remembrance of the sites of their native cities. The town being situated in a swamp, near which



large tracts of mud are left uncovered by the receding tide, the noxious exhalations arising from them cannot fail to be highly injurious to the human constitution. The prevailing fever, which has prematurely carried off thousands of Europeans, is intermitting, and the only remedies yet discovered are of such a violent nature that the constitutions of the few who survive are generally destroyed.

The crews of the European ships which visit Batavia are often thinned by this dreadful malady, for during the night, when the noxious vapours are brought off by the land-wind, the roads are almost as unhealthy as the town. Temperance, and non-exposure to the night air, form the best preservatives against sickness, and it would be advisable for those seafaring men who propose to dine at the country-house of a friend, to make arrangements for sleeping in some salubrious place, as the mortalities among commanders and officers of ships are in general caused by exposure to the night air in going on board their ships after having spent the evening on shore.

The vicinity of Batavia is so dreaded by the natives, that the government is obliged to resort to conscription to keep up a sufficient number of



fishermen for the supply of the city, the unfortunate creatures being drafted from the different towns on the north coast of the island, each of which is compelled to furnish its quota. During the time that they are obliged to remain at Batavia, the pernicious nature of the climate always causes a great mortality among them.

The invidious task of censure is one that I would willingly avoid, and it was my original intention to make as few comments as possible upon the system which has been pursued by the Dutch government towards its oriental possessions. I find, however, that were I to maintain the silence which prudence would perhaps dictate, it would be perfectly impossible to convey a correct idea of the present condition of Java, and I should thereby be guilty of great injustice to the natives, who cannot be properly understood or appreciated unless their position with regard to their rulers should be thoroughly explained. My remarks will probably be distasteful to the Batavian authorities, and possibly to the Dutch generally, but I can only say that had I witnessed the same unwise and oppressive policy in any British settlement, I should have considered it to be equally my duty to express my indignation at



its injustice, and my conviction of its ruinous tendency.

The remarks which I have felt myself in a manner compelled to make will not, I trust, be considered as an attack upon the national character of the Dutch. It has been too certainly proved from long experience, that they are not the best colonists, but I am aware that there are many individuals, both in Holland and in India, who are strongly opposed to the ungenerous measures of their government. In fact, the firmest supporters of the liberal system introduced by Sir Stamford Raffles, during the period of the British occupation of Java, were two Dutch gentlemen, members of the former administration.

Batavia is the seat of the supreme government of Dutch India, and forms the depôt for the produce of all its possessions in the Eastern Archipelago. It was formerly visited by numbers of large junks from China and Siam, and by prahus from all parts of the Archipelago; but since the establishment of the British settlement at Singapore, the perfect freedom of commerce enjoyed at that place has attracted the greater part of the native trade, while that formerly carried on by junks between Batavia and China has totally



ceased: the government is obliged, therefore, to look for its revenue from the produce of its own possessions.

Of the three articles most in demand for European consumption, coffee, pepper, and sugar, the two former are entirely monopolized by the government, and heavy penalties are inflicted on those cultivators who dispose of their produce to private individuals. The price paid by the government for these articles is extremely low, and they are afterwards sold at greatly advanced prices to the merchants. This system has been found so oppressive, that frequently the natives, driven to desperation, destroy their own plantations, preferring beggary to such severe taxation for the support of a government which only seeks to enrich itself, and proves utterly regardless of the welfare and prosperity of those who are subjected to its rule. These acts are always visited with severe punishment, but they are nevertheless of constant occurrence.

The Dutch ships from Europe seldom penetrate beyond Batavia, and the produce of the other possessions is brought in Dutch country ships, a fine class of vessels, for the most part owned, commanded, and officered by British subjects. Spices



are brought from the Moluccas, coffee and pepper from Celebes and Sumatra, gold-dust and diamonds from Borneo, tin from the government mines in Banka, and tortoise-shell, bees'-wax, dye-woods, &c. from Timor, Sumbawa, and the other islands to the eastward. Many of these countries are supplied with rice, which is here the staff of life, by the natives of Java, the most extensively cultivated of all the islands in the Archipelago.

The commerce carried on at Batavia has of course attracted a numerous population, but as no census has ever been taken, its amount can only be guessed at. The Chinese, Javanese, and other natives of India in the town and suburbs must at least amount to one hundred thousand.

The majority of the natives of Java found in Batavia are of Malay extraction, being either the slaves, or the descendants of the slaves of the Dutch, and are much inferior in every respect to the true Javanese. As few of the Europeans who visit Java proceed beyond Batavia, they are apt to judge of the natives of the island from those whom they meet at that port, and had I not penetrated farther into the country, I should, like them, have left the island with a very unfavourable impression



respecting the character and disposition of the Javanese.

The native inhabitants of the town of Batavia are, with few exceptions, slaves, boatmen, servants, or labourers, and no wealthy individuals are to be found among them as in the native population of Bengal. It cannot be justly said, that the Javanese are inferior in intellect to their continental neighbours, and consequently unable to take so prominent a part in the commercial transactions of their country : their apparent supineness proceeds from a different cause. They are unfortunately prevented from exerting themselves in the pursuit of wealth, by the strong opposition which the rulers of Batavia have invariably manifested to their improvement, and by the severe system of taxation which renders it impossible for them to acquire an independence. Every necessary of life is heavily taxed. Rice, fish, and salt are the principal articles of native consumption ; and of these the two latter are monopolized by the government. Salt is disposed of at the government stores at about seven times its real value ; and the whole of the fish brought in by the fishermen, is in the first instance sold in large quantities by a government auctioneer, and can only be pur-



chased by the rich Chinese fishmongers, who require a large profit in retailing this necessary article of life to the people.

The system of slavery which exists is alone sufficient to account for the inferiority of the natives of Batavia, for let it be of ever so mild a nature, it must exercise a very detrimental influence on the human race. A man who is the property of another, and knows that he will remain so during the whole of his life, has no stimulant by which the energies of his mind may be brought into action, and is degraded into a mere animal, gifted with reason. Some of the Dutch families who have been long established in the island, possess large bodies of slaves, who are attached to their establishments.

During my stay at Batavia I saw a catalogue of the property of an individual lately deceased, which was to be sold by auction, and a proportion of it consisted of Javanese, Malay, and Bugis slaves, amounting to between two and three hundred. The qualifications of each were appended to his name, and I was surprised to see that many of them were performers on musical instruments, forming a band as numerous as the orchestra of the King's Theatre.



I made inquiries concerning their late master, and found that he had died in possession of immense wealth, being one of those fortunate individuals who have had riches thrust upon them. My informant said little in favour of his character, in fact described him as an idiot, and one, too, of the very worst description. He was of Dutch extraction, born on the island, and had inherited a landed property on the south coast of Java, in which were discovered extensive caverns containing large quantities of the edible birds'-nests, so highly prized as a delicacy by the Chinese, and from this source he derived a very large income. Being gifted with a taste for music, he had purchased many of the slaves who were now put up for auction, and under his direction they had been instructed in the art by European professors.

The Chinese inhabitants of Batavia, both in wealth and respectability, rank next to the Europeans, many merchants of that nation being immensely rich: their *campong* forms the most industrious portion of the town, and always presents a scene of liveliness and bustle. The main street is appropriated by the merchants, who, however, make no outward display, since, from



the mean appearance of their shops, a stranger could never for a moment suppose that the occupants were rolling in riches.

The other streets are inhabited by carpenters, blacksmiths, tailors, shoemakers, &c. who are to be seen busily following their avocations, allowing nothing to distract their attention from their work. The tenement serving both for warehouse and workshop, the master can attend to his workmen and his customers at the same time. The quarter of the city thus inhabited has so completely the appearance of a Chinese town, that had a portion of Canton, with its houses and residents, been taken up and transplanted into the middle of Batavia, the resemblance could not be more exact.

The Chinese, as far as regards all minor offences, are governed by their own laws, which are administered by the Capitan China, or head Chinaman, always one of the most influential Chinese merchants. He is appointed by the Dutch government, to which he is responsible for the good conduct of his countrymen. By some persons the Chinese are supposed to confer great benefit on Java, but upon close examination it will be found that their settlement on the island has been productive of very injurious effects.



That they have enriched themselves and contributed to the aggrandizement of the Europeans cannot be doubted, but the interests of the natives have suffered proportionably.

The trade in those articles not monopolized by the government is in the hands of the Chinese, from whom the European merchants procure them; they consequently act as intermediate agents between the Europeans and the natives. The accumulation of wealth forms their sole object, and being more energetic, and also more crafty than the Javanese, they have always managed in their commercial transactions to trammel the latter with debts, from which they can rarely afterwards extricate themselves.

The Chinese have pursued a very artful and ungenerous system in their dealings with the native cultivators. It is their policy to prevail on the latter to take goods in advance, to be paid for by the produce of the ensuing harvest at a stipulated price, always much below its real value. They induce the cultivators to receive goods to a greater amount than the probable value of the expected produce, so that when the delivery is made the latter may remain in debt. The following year the price of goods supplied by the Chinese will be



augmented, and that to be paid for by the produce reduced, and the cultivator is nearly certain to be ever afterwards in debt, and therefore a slave to his creditor.

The minor government imposts are farmed exclusively by the Chinese. These imposts include all the smaller articles consumed by the natives, and therefore press very hard upon those who are least able to support them. A hawker of fruits, or sweetmeats, cannot follow his calling without a daily chop or license, which he must purchase from the farmer; and numbers of Chinese are always prowling about, ready to pounce upon and convey to prison those unfortunate beings who endeavour to evade the imposition. It cannot be surprising, therefore, that the natives detest the Chinese, as they see in them the active agents of a system of oppression, by which they are frequently reduced to beggary.

These practices prevail not only in Batavia, but in every town in Java, the foregoing description being equally applicable to all. Samarang and Sourabaya have their China *campong* on a smaller scale, together with the Capitan China, farmers of the revenue, and the whole economy.

As the Chinese transmit the greater part of



their gains to their own country, they act as a constant drain upon the resources of the island, for those who emigrate from China seldom bring with them more than a bundle of clothes, a mat, and a pillow. That they are an industrious, enterprising people, cannot be doubted, and had they found Java an uninhabited waste, they would have made it a garden, but being already occupied by an industrious population, they, by their superior energy, have made the natives subservient to their views in the accumulation of wealth, and in so doing, have only followed the example set before them by the Europeans by whom they have been preceded.

There are few private Dutch merchants in Java, and these are chiefly engaged in the trade of the Archipelago, having little communication with merchants in the mother country. The trade carried on between Java and Holland is principally in the hands of the Nederlandsch Handel Maatschappy, or Dutch Commercial Society, which, like the generality of public companies, is very detrimental to individual enterprise. Some of the most influential individuals in Holland are shareholders in this company, and it is said that the most important personage in



the state is deeply interested in it. Possessed of such advantages, it is not surprising that the Society is enabled to distance all competitors.\*

The British-born subjects at Batavia form the most influential body of private merchants, and the revenues derived by the Government from the duties imposed on British manufactures, must materially aid the great expenditure necessary for the maintenance of its powers in the island. The Dutch, however, cannot have taken this view of the subject, for although the rate of duties to be levied on British goods has been fixed by treaty, they have not hesitated to raise them to such an amount as to act almost as a prohibition.

I could not learn the exact number of British

\* Extract from a Dutch Newspaper of November 1835:—  
“ The existence of the Society of Commerce is an inestimable benefit to Holland. This society has prevented the commerce of our Indian possessions from falling into the hands of the English and the Americans; the result is, that we now have the greatest market for coffee, and the other productions of Java; and if we add to this the hope that may be entertained of the successful cultivation of indigo and cinnamon in that island, the trade with these colonies will attain a degree of prosperity which it never yet had at any period, and it will not be surprising if, in a few years, the shares of the Society should rise to one hundred above par.”



subjects resident in Java, but including those employed in the mercantile navy, it must exceed two hundred. A portion of these are engaged in the culture and manufacture of sugar, machinery imported from England being employed in the works. This portion of husbandry is almost exclusively in the hands of the British and the Chinese. The former have adopted the mode of culture most approved of in the West-Indies, and having the advantage of superior machinery, are enabled to surpass, both in quantity and quality, the sugar produced by the Chinese; but the latter, from their frugality, and their dexterity in procuring cheap labour, generally make the occupation more profitable to themselves.

Large tracts of land in various parts of the island are held by foreigners, who pay a tax of one per cent. on the estimated value of the property to government. The extent of land thus possessed is between four thousand and five thousand square miles, and of this nearly two thousand square miles is the property of British subjects,\* a considerable portion of the

\* One thousand two hundred square miles are the property of a British Company: Sir Charles Forbes is, I believe, the principal.



remainder being held by the Chinese. No more than one-fifth of the produce of the land can lawfully be taken by the proprietor from the native occupant, but the Chinese are in the habit of exacting the greater portion of the produce, and those natives who do not take the precaution of removing from the ground, which has, perhaps, been occupied by their forefathers for centuries, soon become the bondsmen of the Chinese landholders.



## CHAPTER II.

### SOURABAYA.

Sail for Sourabaya.—Javanese Mode of taking Fish.—Land and Sea Breezes.—Native Prahus.—Anecdotes of the Pirates.—Raja Raga.—Adventure between his favourite Panglima and a British Man-of-War.—Arrival at Samarang.—Attempted Murder of a Javanese Fisherman.—Continue the Voyage.—Heavy Squall.—Teak Forests.—Sagacity of a Manilla Bloodhound.—Arrival at Sourabaya.—Description of the Town.—English Residents.—Promenades.—Lizards.—Anecdote of a Tokkay.—Life in Sourabaya.—Liplaps.—Manners and Customs of the Javanese.—System of enlisting Seamen.—Costume of the Natives.—Habitations.—Visit to an Arab Merchant.—Native Christians.—Novel Mode of Ship-building.—Sail for the South Coast of Java.

THE schooner in which I made my voyage, had been in the first instance bound to Sourabaya, the capital of the eastern districts of the island, being in want of repairs, which could be effected at a cheaper rate at that port than at any other belonging to Java. We should not have visited Batavia had the monsoon permitted us to enter the Java sea by the straits to the eastward of the



island. On the 27th December we weighed and stood out of Batavia roads with a strong land wind, and at eight o'clock, having gained an offing of several miles, we found ourselves in the midst of a fleet of fishing-boats, the crews of which were hauling their nets. In addition to these implements, they were provided with fish traps made of basket-work, which are baited with small fry, and afterwards sunk by means of stones, their position being indicated by long bamboo fishing-buoys. These traps are left in the sea all night, and are raised in the morning for the purpose of taking out the fish ; and as each bamboo is furnished with a large bunch of grass fastened to one end, which is made to stand high out of the water by means of a weight attached to the other, the fisherman can readily find them.

The easterly monsoon which prevailed was directly contrary, so that we were only enabled to progress by taking advantage of the land and sea breezes. The land breeze in general commences about midnight, and as it blows directly from the shore, a vessel is able to steer her course the greater part of the night, but after sunrise, the wind always draws round to the eastward, and she is consequently forced off the shore. At



about nine A.M., when seven or eight miles distant from the land, the anchor is dropped, and towards noon, when the sea-breeze sets in, it is again weighed, and the ship is run in and anchored as near the shore as possible, to await the return of the sea-breeze.

In some parts of the world this mode of navigation would be tedious, but here the voyager is constantly amused by the contemplation of the ever varying landscape; and vessels of all descriptions, from the stately ship to the lively canoe, are always passing and re-passing, adding interest and gaiety to the scene.

There are great varieties of native prahus, some being built after an European model, and carrying sails similar to those of our English luggers: others are of native construction with lateen sails, and many built with high stems and sterns, skim along under the *lyer tanjong*, or square mat sail of the Batavian fishing prahus.

On the 30th, we were off Indramayo point, and near a spot which a few years before had been the scene of a most atrocious act of piracy, the circumstances of which were related to me in the following manner. An English merchant, who had resided during several years in Java, em-



barked at Batavia on board one of his vessels, a large brig, for the purpose of visiting Samarang, taking with him a considerable sum of money for the purchase of the produce of the eastern districts. These facts having reached the ears of a famous piratical chief, he determined to waylay the vessel, and accordingly, mustering a sufficient number of prahus, cruized about in the neighbourhood of Indramayo, and meeting with the brig as he had expected, commenced an attack upon her. The crew of the latter vessel consisted of two Englishmen, the captain and the chief officer, and about thirty Javanese seamen, who, together with the owner, defended the vessel for some time. Towards the evening, however, the unfortunate merchant was killed by a spear fired from a musket, and the pirates taking advantage of the confusion produced by this event, immediately boarded. The two remaining Englishmen, being well aware that certain death awaited them should they remain, threw themselves into the sea, and succeeded in reaching a bamboo fishing-buoy, such as I have before described. The pirates, too busily employed in plundering their prize to think of anything else, did not perceive their place of refuge, and the vessels soon



drifted away out of sight. The condition of the persons who had thus escaped had improved very little for the better; they were immersed to the neck in water, dreading every moment the attack of sharks, nor had either, during the whole of the night, the comfort of knowing that his companion was still in existence. Soon after day-light some fishermen appeared, by whom they were perceived, but instead of rescuing them immediately from their perilous situation, the Javanese consulted together for a few minutes, and then approached the sufferers and demanded who they were. On being told that they were Englishmen whose vessel had been attacked and captured by pirates, they were taken on board, treated kindly, and conveyed to the Dutch settlement at Indramayo. Had they belonged to one of the Dutch cruizers, their fate would probably have been different, for the fishermen are on bad terms with the officers of the government prahus, whom they accuse of robbing them of their fish.

I never could learn the name of the piratical chief, but I have every reason to believe that it was the famous Rajah Raga, whose successful acts of piracy rendered him the idol of the people with whom he was associated. He was (or rather



is, for I believe that he is still in existence) the brother of the Sultan of Coti, on the east coast of Borneo, which place he made his head-quarters. He was often sought for both by the English and the Dutch, but always managed to elude pursuit. On one occasion, while cruizing with three large prahus, he was attacked by an English man-of-war, and two of the prahus, with their crews, were destroyed, but the one in which the Rajah had embarked escaped.

On another occasion, his own prahu, which carried upwards of one hundred and fifty men, and mounted several large guns, was entrusted to his favourite panglima or captain, who sailed in her on a cruise. Within a day's sail of Macassar he fell in with a ship, and wishing to distinguish himself by her capture, he fired into her, and made preparations to board. To his utter surprise and dismay, however, he saw a line of large ports opened in the side of the vessel, and he found himself under the guns of a British man-of-war. The panglima hailed, and endeavoured to make it appear that he had acted under a misapprehension, but his subterfuge was of no avail: a broadside from the man-of-war sent his vessel at once to the bottom, and he and all the crew



perished, with the exception of two or three, who clung to a piece of the wreck, and were picked up by a native prahu.

The pirates who infest the Archipelago consist wholly of the inhabitants of the free Mahomedan states in Sumatra, Lingin, Borneo, Magindano, and Sulu; those natives who have remained uncontaminated by the detestable doctrines of the Arabs never being known to engage in the like pursuits. The Europeans who are unfortunate enough to fall into their hands are generally murdered, while the natives who compose the crews of the captured vessels are sold for slaves.

On the 1st of October the peaked mountains of Taggal appeared in sight, although we were still a long distance from it; and on the afternoon of the 3d we anchored in Samarang Roads. I have always regretted that my stay at this place was so short that I could see little of the country in the vicinity. The river, or rather creek, is very shallow, and cannot be entered by loaded boats at low water. The roads also are exceedingly insecure: it owes its importance, therefore, solely to the industry of the natives in the adjacent districts, who raise large quantities of coffee, pepper, and rice. Many ship-loads of the latter



are annually exported to China, and to different countries in the Archipelago.

In the shallow water near the mouth of the river are fixed a number of fishing-weirs, made of bamboo, each of which has a small watch-box attached to it, erected on piles. One of these weirs belonged to an old Javanese, who with his son kept watch alternately every night. A few nights before our arrival, some thieves in a canoe attempted to plunder the weir, but the old man wounded one of them with a spear, on which they all made off. When he came home next morning, as his son was not in the way at the time, he did not mention the circumstance, and the young man took his station at the weir the following night without being aware that there was any necessity for keeping a better look-out than usual. Soon after midnight, when he was dozing on his post, the thieves came suddenly upon him and wounded him in several places with their kresses: he was found on the next morning nearly lifeless, but although his wounds were of so dreadful a nature that they would have been mortal to an European, at the time of our arrival he was rapidly recovering. The natives living principally on vegetable food, a wound seldom becomes much inflamed.



At midnight we weighed and proceeded on our voyage. Dense black clouds hung over the land, and at two A.M. we were overtaken by a furious squall, which, although we had reduced sail previous to its reaching us, nearly threw the schooner on her broadside. The rain poured down in torrents, and the lightning was extremely vivid, but the strength of the squall was soon exhausted, and in less than an hour it passed off to sea, the weather again becoming fine and clear. During the south-east monsoon the land-wind at night often brings off a squall of rain, but it is rarely of long continuance, and the weather always becomes more cool and pleasant after it.

In the morning we were off Japara Point, near which are the ruins of a large city, formerly one of the most populous in Java. Between Japara and Sourabaya several extensive teak forests occur, which are of vast importance to the island, as the timber is well adapted to ship-building, being very durable, and easily worked; indeed there is no other kind of wood in the Archipelago which will endure so well in the water. Java is the only island in these seas possessing teak forests which are available to any extent for the purpose of ship-building. Teak is found in Sumatra,



Celebes, and Sumbawa, but the forests are in these places so far distant from the sea, that the expense of land carriage prevents the natives from deriving any great advantage from its use.

At seven A.M. on the 9th October we rounded Point Panka, and made a signal for a Sourabaya pilot, and soon afterwards receiving one on board from Zidayo, we immediately pushed on for the harbour. The channel between Java and the island of Madura is very narrow, but as it is indicated by posts driven into the mud-bank on either side, a pilot is not absolutely necessary, although a ship must pay the dues, whether she takes one or not. The man we had engaged was a Dane, a noisy drunken fellow, who, instead of assisting to shorten our passage, was the cause of considerable detention; for he anchored the schooner while we were yet several miles distant from the town, although we might have reached it with facility in the evening. His obstinacy, however, proved the cause of considerable inconvenience to himself. During the night he arose and went on deck, and upon his return to the cabin he experienced a reception which, to confess the truth, must have been rather alarming. A large Spanish blood-hound, which he had not previously noticed,



was lying under the table, and not being acquainted with his claim to a berth in the cabin, growled so angrily at him that he very wisely retreated to the other end of the vessel. The unfortunate man not being able to prevail upon any of the sailors to secure the dog, was obliged to remain upon deck all night in the damp, and we found him nearly perished when we got up in the morning. Highly indignant at the conduct of the blood-hound, he declared that it ought to be punished severely: we perfectly agreed with him in this opinion, and he was assured that he had full permission to give the offender a good rope's-ending; on which he cast a furtive glance at the powerful animal (which had just put its head out of the cabin door, as if to acquaint himself with what was going forward), and with great judgment declined to engage in a combat of so dangerous a nature.

From the various accounts which I had received concerning Sourabaya, I expected to find it somewhat different from the place which we had just quitted, but had no idea of the dissimilarity being so striking as it proved. An appearance of gaiety and activity prevails, which would be sought for in vain at Batavia, and the cheerfulness of the scene exercises a corresponding influence



over the mind. Immediately as the schooner anchored, numbers of boats came off, some bringing fruits and refreshments for sale, others the friends and relatives of the seamen, all of whom, although few were actually natives of the place, considered themselves as belonging to it. Prahus and other craft of all sizes, principally traders from the eastern districts, were passing and re-passing up and down the river, and several ships, both in the roads and in the river, were undergoing repairs, the Javanese carpenters and caulkers clustering about them like bees. The town also presented a more habitable and cheerful appearance, there being several very handsome European villas at the entrance. The situation is considered healthy, and therefore it is not shunned as a place of residence, like the fever-engendering swamps of Batavia.

The schooner was hauled into the river to repair, and I took up my residence at the house of a Belgian, who, having more room than he required, was in the habit of letting a part of it to strangers.

Sourabaya is situated on the main-land of Java, on the shores of a narrow strait, which divides it from the large island of Madura. It is the only



perfectly secure harbour on the north coast of Java, and the only one also in which the shipping can be well defended by batteries on shore; therefore, in the event of a war between Holland and a powerful maritime state, Sourabaya will be even of more importance than Batavia.\* The north channel into the harbour is defended by a strong fort erected upon a low island, about nine miles from the town, but the eastern channel is unprotected, except by the shallowness of the water. The town itself, which is a mile and a half from the sea, is divided by a river thirty yards wide, which is navigable by boats one-hundred miles from the sea, and is sufficiently deep at the entrance to admit vessels of two hundred and fifty tons. The land in the vicinity is very low, being little above the level of the sea; but it is not of so swampy a nature as that of the site of Batavia.

During the period of my sojourn at Sourabaya, my mornings were generally occupied in visiting the Chinese and native portions of the town, and the ship-builders' yards; and my evenings were chiefly spent at the residence of an English

\* In 1833, when news arrived in Java of an expected war between Great Britain and Holland, many of the Dutch ships were sent here from Batavia to be out of the way of our cruizers.



merchant, whose hospitality rendered his house the rendezvous of all the conversable part of the European community. My stay at Sourabaya proved altogether more agreeable than that at Batavia, where the insalubrity of the climate kept me in constant dread of an attack of fever, and I had by this time acquired a tolerable knowledge of the Malay language, and therefore was enabled to derive much amusement from my conversations with the natives.

There were several English residents, agents to mercantile houses at Batavia, and the number of Europeans being small, the English and Dutch did not form distinct societies, but maintained a tolerably friendly footing with each other, which seldom happens when both communities are sufficiently extensive to divide.

The quay opposite my residence formed the evening promenade of the European residents, and, especially on a Sunday, presented a very gay appearance. Every European on passing another lifted his hat from his head, but without making any inclination of the body. Upon occasions in which the promenade was well attended, these salutations became so numerous as to furnish constant employment for the right hand, and a



stranger finds the necessity thus imposed upon him rather irksome. The laws of etiquette, however, are always absolute in a colony, and long custom having habituated the old residents to the required ceremony, the hat is raised mechanically, often without the wearer being aware of the action. A story is related of an ourang outang from Borneo belonging to an English gentleman having been placed, by way of experiment, on a chair in front of one of the houses, dressed in European costume, who received with the greatest gravity the salutes of the gentlemen, *en passant*—but whether he returned them or not, my informant did not say.

The town of Sourabaya being of small extent, carriages are only employed by the ladies, but every resident keeps a saddle-horse or two, for the purpose of taking morning rides into the country.

The house in which I resided was of considerable size, all the apartments being on the ground floor. My bed-room was situated at the back part of the house, having two venetian windows looking out into a large compound, and the sea breeze during the evening kept it delightfully cool.



The only annoyance which I experienced in this abode proceeded from a large lizard called a *tokkay*: this reptile disturbed my slumbers nightly by its vociferations, and although I frequently tried to dislodge it from the spot in which it had taken up its station, I never could succeed. These lizards pronounce the word *tokkay* in a loud distinct tone, and a stranger, if not informed of the peculiar nature of the cry, would certainly imagine the word to proceed from the lips of a human being. A story is told at Sourabaya of rather a ludicrous nature relative to a mistake occasioned by the oral powers of one of these lizards.

An American ship, commanded by a Captain Tookey, arrived at Samarang, and the captain being much fatigued, retired to rest early in the evening at the house of his agent. When on the point of falling asleep, he thought he heard some one calling out "Tookey." "Hallo!" said the captain, "what is it?" A dead silence. Presently came the voice again, "Tookey." "That's my name," answered he, "if you want me, come round to the door." After a short pause, he heard his name pronounced a third time, louder than before. "Well," said he, "these savages are unnatural chaps altogether, to come to a man's



window bawling out his name when he wants to go to sleep; however, I'll try if I can't spoil his pipe;" and he forthwith seized a decanter and opened the window, but not a soul was to be seen. He was on the point of closing it, and returning to his bed, when he heard his name called out again, as he thought, in a jeering manner, and the decanter was immediately dashed in the direction from which the voice proceeded. The host, and two or three of his friends, happened to be enjoying their cigars in an adjoining apartment, and they imagined at first that the captain was talking in his sleep; but when they heard him rushing about the room, and stumbling over the furniture, they thought it high time to interfere; upon their entrance they found him boiling with rage, and searching for some other missile to hurl at the offender; and it was some time before they could persuade him that he had been holding a conversation with a lizard about twelve inches long.

The ceiling of my room was constantly occupied by several little grey lizards, about three inches long, which traversed it in pursuit of flies. During the evening they were always over my table, either in consequence of being able to see better,



or on account of the flies being attracted to that part by the light of the lamp, and I was often amused by watching their proceedings. When a fly settled on the ceiling, a lizard would advance cautiously to within about an inch, and then make a dart at it, generally succeeding in seizing the insect. They sometimes attacked large moths, but were not always successful, unless they could manage to seize the head, when, after a struggle of a few minutes, the little reptile would bear away his prey to devour at his leisure. One of them fell down among my papers one evening, and was stunned by the fall; so that I had an opportunity of examining him before he acquired sufficient strength to run away. On holding him up to the light he appeared semi-transparent, and his feet were velvet-like to the touch, from which I supposed he possessed his extraordinary prehensile powers. They were great favourites with me, as they waged constant war with musquitoes; and I established such an intimacy with one of them, in consequence of feeding him frequently with flies, that he would at last come down the wall to take one from my fingers.

As a residence, Sourabaya is generally preferred by Europeans to Batavia, for not only is the



climate better, but provisions and luxuries are to be procured cheaper, and in greater abundance than at the latter place. Poultry, fruits, vegetables, and provisions of all kinds are brought to market daily by the natives. Bullocks of a breed superior to any in eastern India, are brought in boats from the opposite island of Madura, where the rich pastures afford them a constant supply of food. The potato, which is rarely found in perfection in this part of the world, is produced at Sourabaya of a quality inferior only to that of Europe. The fertility of the soil yields an abundant supply of food, and those who have been accustomed to the high prices of Europe, are astonished at the trifling nature of the expenditure required to keep up a large establishment.

The smallness of the number of European females in Sourabaya renders the state of morality rather lax, many of the foreign residents being induced to place a Javanese woman at the head of their establishments, to take the conduct of their household affairs. Such superintendents are to be found in all the other Dutch settlements; but at Batavia the situation of the individual thus selected is not very apparent, and a stranger might take up his abode in a mansion at that place for



some time, without being aware that any body was invested with authority over its domestic concerns besides the master. At Sourabaya, however, appearances are not so much regarded, and an European may sometimes be seen taking an evening drive, in the most public places, in the same carriage with his *chère amie*.

The admission of a Javanese housekeeper is defended on the plea that an European wife is not to be procured, and that if they have not some one at the head of the establishment who will take an interest in their affairs, they will be so dreadfully plundered by their servants that their expenses will amount to utter ruin. On the principle of economy this plea can scarcely be deemed valid, for the women, aware that the connexion cannot be permanent, generally contrive to make up a weighty private purse from the money which they receive for the household expenses.

There is of course a considerable number of half-castes, or as they are called “Liplaps,” who, it has been maliciously said, inherit the bad qualities of both parents, without the good ones of either. That they are inferior in point of morality to the majority of the Javanese, cannot be denied; but how far this may be the result of



a defective education remains to be examined. The mother seldom belongs to the higher classes of natives, and as the early education of the child is entrusted to her and to her slaves, it imbibes bad principles, which, in its future communication with Europeans, are perhaps rather confirmed than eradicated.

The males always adopt the dress of Europeans, who they endeavour to imitate as much as possible. They are not shut out from government offices of trust like the half-castes of British India, many of them receiving commissions in the army and navy, while the subordinate situations in the government offices are entirely filled by them. Nevertheless all are not very strongly attached to their present rulers, for many still regret the departure of the English, at which period the handsome salaries given by the government were reduced to the former pittance.

The females of this class seldom have any education whatever bestowed upon them, and, as they usually adopt the native costume, are scarcely distinguishable from the Javanese women. They are always ready to form connexions with Europeans, a marriage ceremony being rarely insisted on.



The people of Sourabaya, who are the true Javanese, differ much from the more idle natives of Batavia. In stature they do not often exceed the middle size, they are thick set, and generally possess mild and pleasing countenances. The hue of the skin is darker than that of the Chinese, but they are fairer than the natives of Hindostan. Naturally mild in his manners, and industrious in his habits, when a bad trait is discovered in the character of a Javanese it can generally be traced to his intercourse with foreigners.

The women are inferior in personal attractions to the females of many of the neighbouring islands, but are considered to be much more amiable in their dispositions.

The Javanese are nominally Mahommedans, but they have not allowed their assumption of the religion of Islam to deprive them of their former ceremonies, many of which are retained, thus mingling old customs with the new ones, which they have adopted from the Arabs, and rendering the doctrines of the prophet little better than idolatrous.

During my stay at Sourabaya, the son of a native chief was married to a relation of the sultan of Madura. For several days previous to the



wedding, the bridegroom paraded the town on horseback, covered with jewels, and having his skin daubed over with yellow paint.\* He was accompanied by a numerous body of friends and dependents, a band of music preceding the cavalcade. At the same time the bride, borne in a litter, and also accompanied by her female friends, made a circuit through another part of the town. On the day of the nuptials the two processions joined, and, in addition to the friends of both parties, the bridal train was this day augmented by a long string of females, carrying the presents intended for the bride; fifty women were employed in bearing these gifts, in order to make them appear of great value and importance, while a dozen would have been amply sufficient for the purpose.

As in most eastern countries, the courtship is carried on entirely through the medium of the parents of the young people, and any interference on the part of the bride would be considered highly indecorous. The richer natives often take several wives, but the ceremony is only performed with one, the others being procured by purchase.

\* A complexion of a gold colour is considered by the Javanese as the perfection of beauty.



Among the lower classes of Javanese a nuptial ceremony is rarely performed, the mere fact of a man and a woman living together constituting the marriage. Neither is polygamy practised by them, for the men often find one wife too much for their domestic comfort. The females are never secluded, except by the descendants of Arabs, and two or three fanatical chiefs; indeed they enjoy a degree of liberty perhaps unequalled in any country in the world. The necessaries of life are to be procured so cheaply, that the women, who are even more industrious than the men, find no difficulty in supporting themselves, and consequently feel quite independent, and at liberty to act according to their inclinations. As no ceremony is required for the marriage, of course none can be necessary for the divorce, and when the parties are tired of each other, they separate and form new connexions. Women of two or three and twenty may sometimes be seen living with their fourth or fifth husbands, without any great odium being attached to them on account of the frequent transfer of their affections.

The Javanese are decidedly an agricultural people, nevertheless four-fifths of the crews of ships navigating the Archipelago are composed of



them. The Malays, although addicted to maritime pursuits, are rarely to be found on board ships conducted by Europeans, and the few that I have met with were far inferior to the Javanese, both in seamanship and steadiness. This may be accounted for by the fact, that the latter being from habit more mild and docile, are more easily brought into that state of discipline necessary for the proper conduct of a ship, in which a number of men are assembled together.

Sourabaya may be considered the head quarters of the Javanese seamen, as none are to be procured at Batavia, except such as have deserted from, or have been turned out of the ships that have visited the port. Consequently, if a ship require to change, or fill up her crew, she must resort to Sourabaya for the purpose.

It is said of English sailors, that they "earn their money like horses and spend it like asses," and the saying is equally applicable to the Javanese. When they receive their wages, they think of little else but getting rid of them, and all their money is soon laid out in finery and sweetmeats.

There are several Bengalis in Sourabaya, called Ghaut Serangs (Anglice Crimps), who advance money to the seamen when they have disposed of



their wages, and consequently obtain an influence over their future proceedings. When a ship requires a crew, the serang or boatswain of the vessel receives a sum of money from the commander, sufficient to pay two months' advance wages to the seamen, at the rate of ten rupees \* each. The serang then makes arrangements with a ghaut serang, and a few able seamen are engaged at the rate of twelve rupees per month; a number of others are engaged at eight rupees, but the landsmen, who form a large proportion of the crew, are engaged at the rate of five or six rupees per month. The poor fellows seldom receive the money advanced for them, for it is generally claimed as a debt by the ghaut serang, or they are supplied with necessaries by him, of course at his own price.

This practice once prevailed at Calcutta, but the Government, after much opposition from the ghaut serangs, who endeavoured to prevent the seamen from registering their names, has succeeded in establishing an office, at which commanders of ships may procure seamen on the payment of a small sum per head for the support of the esta-

\* A Java rupee or guilder is one shilling and eightpence sterling.



blishment ; they, therefore, have the gratification of knowing that their money has not tended to enrich a set of wretches who fatten on human misery. The same plan might be adopted with great advantage at Sourabaya,\* but it cannot yet be hoped for, as the ghaut serangs pay a considerable sum to the Dutch government for the exercise of their privileges.

The mild, unsuspecting natives of the up-country, who come to the town to sell the produce of their industry, are frequently entrapped by emissaries belonging to the ghaut serangs, by whom they are plied with intoxicating drugs, and, while in a state of stupefaction, are robbed and sent on board a ship perhaps about to sail upon a distant voyage. It is easy to imagine what the feelings of these men must be when they awake and find themselves embarked upon an element of which they entertain the greatest dread ; and are driven by blows to perform a duty to which they have been totally unaccustomed. No one could feel surprised, if, goaded to desperation, men thus cruelly duped were to rush upon the persons of those whom they have reason to believe have been the means of reducing them to their present

\* And perhaps in London also.



deplorable condition. Such an event occurs less frequently than might be supposed from the numerous instances of deception practised towards them. It is true that the sense of wrong, and the resistance of outrage, sometimes occasion sudden and fearful vengeance; we hear of native crews rising upon their officers, but are seldom made acquainted with the cruel nature of the oppression which has driven them to mutiny.

The dress of the Javanese at Sourabaya varies considerably, according to the occupation of the wearer. That of the men who are not obliged to resort to manual labour, consists of a loose petticoat, called a *sarong*; a *kabya*, a cotton jacket, open in front; and a *saputangan* or handkerchief bound round the head. The dress of the servants of Europeans is of a similar description, with the addition of a pair of white pantaloons. The ship carpenters, caulkers, &c. wear a shirt and trowsers made of blue cotton cloth, and to protect the head from the sun, cover it with a bowl-shaped hat, made of varnished basket work, which makes them appear as if crowned with wash-hand basins. Slaves and field labourers are contented with a piece of cloth round the loins.



The sailors when on shore throw off their sea costume of shirt and pantaloons, and clothe themselves according to their fancy, sometimes cutting the most absurd figures imaginable. I met some of the schooner's men a few days after our arrival, but they had so disguised themselves that I had considerable difficulty in recognising them. The poor fellows looked rather foolish, for they perceived that I could scarcely restrain my mirth at the extraordinary appearance which they made. One of them, an active fore-top-man, had a thing on his back like a loose dressing gown, reaching down to his heels ; it was made of British calico, of a large sofa-cover pattern, with enormous red and yellow flowers. Another had decked himself in a pair of silk pantaloons, one leg pink, and the other blue, with a quantity of flowing drapery about his shoulders ; and grinning behind the rest came one of the Jerramudis, who, from his absurd ugliness had been nick-named by his shipmates " Satan," carrying a large Chinese umbrella to shield his complexion from the sun.

The dress of the Javanese ladies differs but little from that of the males of the upper class, except in the *kabya* being buttoned across the breast. No covering is worn for the head, their



bright black hair being tastefully arranged in a knot, decorated with bunches of white flowers. The women of the lower class wear a blue *sarong*, and a wide shirt of the same colour. Both sexes, but more particularly the females, pay great regard to cleanliness, bathing at least once a day.

The dresses of the people are usually composed of Javanese calico, large quantities of which are manufactured by the women, both for home use and for exportation. In point of manufacture it may certainly be said to be superior to the calicos of Bali and Macassar, but the staple of the cotton produced in Java is inferior to that of the islands to the eastward. The machinery used in the manufacture continues to be of a very primitive description, and a month at the least is required to clean, spin, and weave a piece of cloth four feet wide and twelve feet long.

The art of calico-printing is totally unknown, and when it is requisite to dye the web of different colours, those portions which are not intended to receive the tint are dabbed over with wax, and the cloth thus prepared being thrown into the vat, the wax is removed after it has received the dye. The colours are always extremely dull, but are found to stand well.



In consequence of the mild nature of the climate, the habitations of the natives are constructed with a view to afford shelter from the rays of the sun, and at the same time to admit a free circulation of air. They are oblong, and the floor is generally raised a few feet from the ground. The frame is composed of bamboos and poles tied together with rattans, and the walls and roof are covered with *attops*, a kind of reed thatch, which is found to be very durable. The floor is of split bamboos, also secured with rattans, so that not a particle of iron is used in the construction. They are so extremely light that they can easily be removed to another spot, should the owner wish to alter the site of his habitation. Many of the poorer Europeans inhabit houses of this description, and they appear to be far better suited to the climate than those constructed of brick.

Although slavery is permitted, indeed encouraged in Java by the government, the chiefs are averse to it, and rarely require the services of slaves: the Dutch, Chinese, and Arabs being the principal slave-owners. The Arabs are complete slave-dealers, and have often been known to kidnap the natives of some of the less civilized



parts of the Archipelago. The ships belonging to these wretches are for the most part navigated by slaves, who are either procured in the above manner, or are received as presents from the chiefs of the Malay ports which they frequent.

A considerable number of Arabs and their descendants are settled at Sourabaya; while Grissik, a sea-port town, about five miles distant, may almost be termed an Arab colony, for it is principally occupied by these people and their slaves.

I accompanied a friend one morning on a visit of business to Seyed Hassan, who is supposed to be the richest Arab merchant and ship-owner on the island. His house and premises, situated on the banks of the river, were very extensive, but, like all his countrymen, his household expenditure was small; and this may account in a measure for the rapidity with which they acquire riches, Seyed Hassan was greatly superior to the generality of Arab merchants, and spoke Dutch and English with tolerable fluency. He was habited in the loose flowing robes peculiar to his country, which set off his noble figure to great advantage. We were received in a room furnished in the European style, which appeared to be exclusively



appropriated for the reception of European visitors. Soon after our arrival, several cups of Mocha coffee were brought in by a slave, and while sipping it, my friend proceeded to transact the business which had brought him to the spot. The Seyed complimented the English on the sound judgment which they had displayed in making Singapore a free port, its excellence being proved by the extensive commerce which the liberal system adopted there had attracted to the settlement.

As the natives of the maritime parts of the Archipelago generally profess the Mahommedan religion, the Arabs possess great advantages over their trading competitors, since, on account of the superior sanctity with which they are supposed to be invested, a remission of the duties exacted from others is made in their favour at the greater number of native ports.

The genuine Arabs are often high-minded enterprising men, but their half-caste descendants who swarm in the Archipelago, comprise the most despicable set of wretches in existence. Under the name of religion they have introduced among the natives the vilest system of intolerance and wickedness imaginable, and those places in



which they have gained an ascendancy, are invariably converted into dens of infamy and piracy. In Java, although they have succeeded in rendering their religion paramount, they have been unable to introduce the bigotry which has caused the ruin of all the Malay states, the feelings of the natives being directly opposed to anything approaching to the fanaticism which forms a distinguishing mark of too many of the followers of the prophet. The Javanese, indeed, are so far from being rigid Mahommedans, that although the natives of the coast are brought into closer contact with the Arabs than those of the interior, there is considerable difficulty in discovering whether they have any religion at all. Some remains of Hinduism are still to be found in one of the up-country districts, but the community amid which it exists is very small.

There are many native Christians in the island, particularly in Sourabaya, who have been converted by the Dutch missionaries, an exceedingly valuable and meritorious class of men, who, with very little encouragement from the Colonial government, have effected much real good, both here and in other parts of the Archipelago. They have not been contented with an establishment in



the large towns, in which the comforts of life are to be readily procured, but have scattered themselves over the wilder islands to the eastward, and in some of these remote places have succeeded in converting the entire population. When the system of commercial monopoly, which has exercised so baleful an influence against the improvement of the natives, shall be destroyed, and it is fast working its own ruin, the people of these islands will, in all probability, attain a degree of civilization unequalled in Eastern India, and that too in a much shorter period than persons unacquainted with these favourable circumstances could suppose.

Although there are a greater number of ships built and repaired at Sourabaya than in any other part of Eastern India, there is at present only one European ship-builder, an Englishman, who has been settled in the country for a considerable period, and is carrying on a very extensive business. His carpenters, amounting to between three and four hundred, occupy a large village adjoining his dock-yard. A stranger, on seeing a Javanese carpenter's tools and his manner of using them, would scarcely suppose that any given number of workmen could build a ship of large burden. The axe, which is solely employed



in shaping timber, is not larger than a first-sized English chisel, and altogether does not weigh more than a pound; the head can be taken out of the handle, and turned half round, and is then used as an adze. When a carpenter wishes to shape a piece of timber, he first marks it with chalk, and then seating himself, commences picking away with his little instrument, which he continues until the timber is reduced to the size required. There is of course a great waste of wood, but it is to be procured at so cheap a rate that it is little regarded.

The largest merchant-vessel in Java, a ship about one thousand tons burden, was built by an Arab merchant, in a long but shallow river, which runs into the sea near Sourabaya. As great expense is incurred by floating the timber in rafts down the river, he determined to commence the work in the forest itself, as he would thereby be enabled to select the best trees for the purpose. He accordingly ascended the river, accompanied by a sufficient number of workmen, conveying the necessary materials, and commenced the undertaking about eighty miles from the sea. When the keel, and the floor timbers were laid, and a few of the bottom planks nailed on, he launched



the embryo vessel, and floated her gently down the river to a place in which the water was deeper. Here the building was continued, until it became necessary to seek a deeper channel, and in this manner the work proceeded, the vessel being floated farther down the river whenever the water was found to be too shallow for her to float, until at length she was fairly launched, half finished, into the sea, and completed in the harbour.

Unfortunately for the success of this novel scheme, the enterprising Arab had made an error in his calculations, and he was obliged to sell the vessel at a sacrifice, for want of sufficient funds to fit her out for sea.

On my arrival at Sourabaya, I had learned that the Dutch ship Mercury, commanded by an Englishman, had been chartered by government to convey salt and money to the settlements on the south coast of Java, a part of the island I much wished to visit, and that this vessel would call at Sourabaya on the way. She came into the harbour about three weeks after my arrival, and I succeeded in making arrangements which enabled me to proceed in her for the remainder of her voyage. She was bound for Cali Pujang, the principal Dutch settlement on the south coast of Java, but



was to touch in the first place at Samanap, on the island of Madura, to take in salt, and after the discharge of her cargo at the former named port, to continue round to Batavia; a voyage which promised me a gratification that I at one time scarcely hoped to obtain, and which some very fortuitous circumstances placed within my reach.



### CHAPTER III.

#### T O U R O F J A V A .

Incidents at Sea.—Arrival at Samanap.—Salt Pans.—Cattle.—  
The Panambahan and his Fish Ponds.—Departure from  
Samanap.—Economy of a Country Ship.—Comparative  
Efficiency of Javanese Seamen.—Their Mode of Life.—  
Amusements.—Gummock, a Mountaineer.—Enter the Indian  
Ocean by Lombok Strait.—Present State of the Islands of  
Bali and Lombok.—Voyage along the South Coast of Java.—  
Nusa Kambangan, or the Floating Island.—Dangerous Situa-  
tion of the Ship.—Anchor at Cali Pujang.—Transactions.—  
Desertion and Capture of Two Seamen.—Marine Fête given  
to the Javanese.—Dancing Girls.—Wyang, or Native Play.  
—Anecdote of a Mountaineer.—Entertainment at the Port.  
—Topography of Cali Pujang.—Government Productions.—  
Edible Birds' Nests.—Zoology.—Prospective Importance of  
Cali Pujang.—Sail for Batavia.—Arrival there.—Sir Stamford  
Raffles.

ON the 10th November, 1832, I took leave of  
Captain Pace, who had contributed to render my  
voyage in his schooner one of the most agreeable  
which I had ever made, and at nine A.M. we  
weighed anchor, and worked to the eastward  
towards Samanap. At noon we saw a ship under



English colours aground on the sand-bank which lined the south side of the channel, and at three P.M. we anchored, when the captain immediately went on board the English vessel to see if any assistance could be rendered to her. She proved to be the "Princess Charlotte," bound from New South Wales to Sourabaya for repairs. She was bumping heavily on the bank, and being an old vessel, it was supposed that she would go to pieces. Several large boats from Sourabaya were alongside taking out her cargo.

As the monsoon was against us, we had a long passage to Samanap. On the 14th we reached in under Gunung Ringit (Dollar Mountain) on the coast of Java, and then stretched across towards Madura, and on the 16th we anchored close to Gili Ginting, an island nine miles from Samanap, at which the vessel remained to take in her cargo, as the roads are considered unsafe for shipping during the south-east monsoon. Our arrival being expected, the salt was ready to be shipped, and the morning after we had anchored several large boats came off bringing part of the cargo.

The island of Madura is eighty-five miles long, and from twenty to thirty broad. The name of



Madura is applied by Europeans to the entire island, but is given by the natives only to that portion nearest to Sourabaya. The district of Samanap, the eastern moiety of the island, is nominally under a native chief called the Panambahan, but the Dutch have a resident and a number of soldiers stationed at the principal town, to enforce the salt monopolies, and to collect the commercial duties.

During the week that we remained near Samanap, I spent but one day in the town, and had no wish to renew my visit, it having precisely the same appearance as the sea-port towns in Java of a similar description. There was a fort in which the Europeans resided; a large house inhabited by the chief; a campong occupied by the calculating and industrious Chinese; the remainder being composed of the bamboo huts of the natives.

No country in the Archipelago is better adapted for the manufacture of salt than the eastern part of Madura: the land near the sea-shore is low; the soil is of a clayey nature, necessary for holding the salt-water in the pans; and there are no mountains in the vicinity to attract rain to wash away the salt. The incrustation does not take place in the pan into which the salt-water is first



introduced, but in the last of five or six, in each of which the water remains a few days to evaporate. The pans are sometimes several acres in extent.

The island is famed for its breed of cattle, and the rich pastures are covered with them. Large quantities of beef are cured by the natives for exportation, the process it undergoes being well adapted to the nature of the climate. The meat is cut into strips, and after being dipped in brine and powdered with pepper, is dried by the heat of the sun. It is deservedly prized by the natives of the Archipelago; and, as it keeps a long time, forms a good addition to the stores of a ship proceeding on a long voyage; it much resembles, but is far superior to, the jerked beef of South America.

The Panambahan of Samanap is a stout strong-built man, greatly resembling in appearance the hill-people of Java, and is, or rather was, a great friend of the Dutch. During a late insurrection of the natives of Java, this chief hastened in person to the assistance of his allies, accompanied by a considerable body of men, and it was principally through his instrumentality that the insurrection was repressed. The Dutch government



adopted a novel plan for the reward of his services ; for, during his absence, the resident of Samanap was instructed to take possession of some extensive fish-ponds from which the Panambahan derived the greater part of his revenue, and the government has retained them ever since. Being now greatly impoverished, he has not the means, if he should retain the wish, of again assisting his allies. This oppressive act was committed by the Dutch with the view of crippling the resources of a chief, whose power (for he had great influence with the natives) had excited their jealousy, although employed for the time in their service.

The fish-ponds alluded to are extensive tanks of salt-water, in which sea-fish are fattened for the table. These are highly prized by the Chinese, who spare no expense to procure them.

The cargo being all on board by the 23d of November, we put to sea and continued our voyage, intending to pass through one of the straits to the eastward of Java into the Indian Ocean. The westerly monsoon generally sets in during October, but it was now the latter end of November, and the east monsoon still prevailed. It was directly contrary to our course, but by



taking advantage of the slants, we were enabled to advance tolerably well.

The Mercury was a ship of three hundred and fifty tons, rather larger than the generality of Java ships, a smaller class of vessels being better suited to these seas. The country ships always carry a very considerable number of men, and consequently perform their evolutions with great celerity, being in this point but little inferior to vessels of war.

A ship of three hundred tons has a commander, two European officers, a gunner, a serang or boatswain, and three tindals, with from fifty to sixty seamen. The commander and chief officer stand in much the same relation to each other as the captain and master of a man-of-war, the management of the vessel, as far as regards seamanship, being principally in the hands of the chief officer. The gunner, who is generally a half-caste, has no sinecure; he superintends the sail-makers; has charge of the gunpowder, paints, and other stores; serves out the provisions to the crew; and when the vessel is in harbour, conducts the stowing of the cargo. The duties of the serang are much the same as those of a boatswain, but the former is a more influential personage,



for the officers and crew being of different nations, the serang, who is always a native of India, forms the medium of communication between them in affairs connected with the minor economy of the ship. This office is generally filled by a Bengali, or by a Javanese who has sailed much in Bengal ships. The selection is not made in consequence of the Bengalis being considered better seamen, for they are not so esteemed, but on account of the serangs of that nation bearing the character of strict disciplinarians, who never allow private friendships to interfere with their duty. A native of Bengal in office is generally inclined to domineer over those who may be placed under him ; but in Java, every communication between the people of the country is distinguished by what may be deemed such extraordinary consideration for the feelings of others, that the highest chief rarely addresses his humblest menial in harsh language, *Javanice* brings him to shame. A Javanese serang, therefore, endeavours to accomplish by coaxing, that which a Bengali would insist on by command, and for that reason does not, perhaps, carry on his duty quite so smartly as the latter.

Much difference of opinion exists respecting the comparative efficiency of the Bengali and Java-



nese seamen. I had gained some knowledge of the former, previous to my arrival in the Archipelago, having made a voyage to India in a ship in which there were two hundred Bengal lascars; but I must confess that, in every respect, I prefer the Javanese. The cringing humility of the Bengalis may recommend them to some persons, but in cases of danger they would be glad to exchange it for the courage and spirit of the Javanese. It was my fortune to be in a boat manned with Bengal lascars, which was driven out to sea in a gale of wind, and these wretched creatures, to a man, lay down in the bottom of it, and refused to exert themselves for the preservation of their lives. A Javanese, in the like situation, would never relinquish hope, but would strive gallantly to the last in the endeavour to avert his fate. A Javanese, when his ship is attacked by pirates, will defend her to the utmost, while a Bengali would make an attempt to escape by concealing himself below.\*

\* In 1836, the opium clipper *Lady Grant*, manned with a few Europeans and a number of Bengal lascars, was attacked by a piratical prahu in the Straits of Malacca, which was soon beaten off. Within a short period, however, the prahu returned, having been reinforced by four others, which so terrified the serang, that he screamed out, "Allah!



There are generally three tindals, or boatswain's mates ; one is stationed at each mast, and it is his duty to see that the ropes are coiled down clear, and that everything is in its place. At night he collects the portion of the crew under his charge, and they lie down to sleep on the deck close to the mast to which they are attached, and can therefore be easily aroused should the officer of the watch find it necessary to make any alteration in the arrangement of the sails. Two or three men are stationed in each top, day and night, ready to loose or furl the lighter sails, and in consequence of these arrangements, a press of canvas may be carried in all weathers, as sail can be reduced with the greatest despatch.

The crews always sleep on deck, as the small forecastle appropriated to their use will scarcely contain their boxes, and if any space should be left, it is monopolized by the serang. Every man endeavours to procure a kadjang mat, made of reeds, under which to creep on rainy nights. When the sky is clear, and the weather dry, they are happy and content ; but in the north-west there are five of them !" and dived down below, together with his countrymen, who did not make their appearance until the prahus had been again beaten off by the Europeans.



monsoon, when the rain pours down in torrents, the poor creatures suffer dreadfully from the wet and cold to which they are exposed. The provisions supplied to them consist only of rice and salt-fish, but every man brings with him a few Chili pepper-pods, and other little vegetable dainties, to season his simple fare. Constant exposure to the weather undermines the constitution of these poor men, and causes premature death; an old Javanese seaman is, consequently, rarely to be met with.

A few words more respecting the Javanese seamen, will tend to show from what source our merchantmen, and even our men-of-war, on the Indian station, may be partly supplied with seamen, should the Archipelago ever again be frequented by British ships. The Javanese, when mixed with Europeans on board vessels of war, are found to be little inferior to any seamen in the world. Totally devoid of the disgusting prejudices of the Bengali seamen, who consider that anything touched by a Christian is polluted, they endeavour to imitate the Europeans in boldness and enterprise, and in a great measure adopt their manners and their mode of dress. This fact is proved by the efficiency of the crews of Dutch



colonial war vessels, which are composed of equal proportions of Europeans and Javanese.

The Javanese seamen surpass Europeans in agility in climbing the rigging, and indeed, in this point are inferior only to monkeys.\* One of the principal causes of the superiority of the Javanese to Europeans in working aloft, consists in the use which they make of their toes. In climbing a rope, instead of swarming up, the rope is grasped both by the hands and between the two first toes of the foot, and is ascended hand over hand like a ladder. On one occasion I saw a whole ship's company thus ascend the rigging to reef topsails. The ratlines (the small ropes which are fixed across the shrouds to form the steps of

\* During my stay in the Archipelago one instance alone occurred to my knowledge of a man falling from aloft. The individual in question was asleep on the fore-crosstrees, when the topmast and the arms of the crosstrees were carried away in a squall, and before he was quite awake he came down plump upon an old sail which was lying on the forecastle. Aroused in this unpleasant manner from his slumbers, he made the most horrid contortions imaginable, writhing as if every limb had been dislocated; but having discovered that he had not sustained the slightest injury, except from the fright, I made him acquainted with this important fact, and as he thought the "Tuan" must know more about it than himself, he discontinued his grimaces, and in a few minutes was again aloft clearing away the wreck.



the ladders) had been taken down ; but this circumstance created no difficulty, and they all got up nearly as quickly as if the ratlines had been there. A seaman, when splicing a rope, or sewing a piece of canvass, holds the article between his toes ; and a carpenter steadies, in like manner, a piece of wood that he is shaping, and therefore retains both hands at liberty to handle his tools.

My voyage in the *Mercury* afforded me an excellent opportunity of making myself acquainted with the real character of the Javanese, since, most fortunately, the captain perfectly understood and appreciated a class of men who have been so frequently mistaken and maligned. He encouraged cheerfulness among them as far as it was in his power, and in an evening when they had finished their work, they were permitted to come upon the quarter-deck, to amuse themselves with those sports for which there was not sufficient space in any other part of the ship. Their favourite game consisted of one which, I believe, may be considered peculiar to their nation. Two persons engaged in it at a time, and the performers in the first place twisted their handkerchiefs up like ropes, until they were sufficiently hard to



inflict a smart blow. They were then blindfolded, and placed on their knees on the opposite sides of a bucket, standing on the deck, the left hand touching the bucket, and the other wielding the handkerchief. They were permitted to move round the bucket, but on no account to take the left hand from it. We will suppose that Sedin and Joyo were the players. Sedin would commence by calling out, "*Joyo demana adda*," (where is Joyo?); on which Joyo would presently answer, "*Adda deseni*," (he is here), and would immediately endeavour, with as little noise as possible, to remove himself as far as he could from the spot from whence he answered, without, however, losing his hold of the bucket. Sedin, after allowing his adversary about half a minute to place himself, and listening attentively all the time in the endeavour to discover by the noise the precise situation which he had taken up, would give a smart stroke with his handkerchief on the spot in which he supposed that he had placed himself; and whether he succeeded in striking him or not, the attempt was certain to elicit shouts of laughter. It would now be Joyo's turn, and if he had received a stinging blow, he would endeavour to repay it with interest. If either party



evinced any symptoms of loss of temper, the bystanders removed him, and put another in his place, when he, perhaps, would have the gratification of seeing his former adversary well paid in his turn.

Among the crew of the ship there was a native of the mountains in the interior of Java, a stout, clumsily-built man, who spoke only a few words of Malay, and who, upon inquiry I found had never been on board a ship before. He had come down to Sourabaya with some produce belonging to his friends to dispose of, and having fallen into bad company, had lost the proceeds of the goods entrusted to his charge. As he did not like to return to his friends without the money, he had entered on board the ship in the hopes of retrieving his lost capital. Being a very stout man, he had been nick-named by his shipmates "Gummok," (fatty), and was often the subject of their practical jokes. On one occasion, poor Gummok was induced to become one of the players at the above-mentioned game, and his adversary removing the bandage by which he was hoodwinked, was consequently enabled to hit the luckless Gummok at every stroke, and at the same time to avoid all



chance of retaliation. After undergoing this discipline for a considerable time, he managed to peep out from under his hoodwink, and seeing how the case stood, dealt his adversary two or three blows which more than repaid the compliment.

These amusements do not take place on board every ship on the coast, for in the majority the crew are so roughly treated that they have no spirit to engage in them; and even should they be inclined to beguile their cares with a little recreation, they would probably not be permitted to make the trial, from a mistaken notion that such indulgence might tend to produce a laxity of discipline. The incorrectness of the view taken by harsh and inconsiderate men, is in my opinion proved by the fact, that the *Mercury* was universally allowed to be the best conducted ship in Java, and certainly in none were the happiness and comfort of the crew more considered.

On the 26th of November we passed Cape Sadana, the north-east extremity of Java, and as the wind prevented our entering the narrow strait between that island and Bali, we pushed on for the next, the strait of Lombok. At noon we were in mid-channel between the islands of Bali and



Lombok, the town of Carrang Assam on the former, and that of Ampanam on the latter, being in sight.

I regretted that the necessity of proceeding with the greatest dispatch, prevented our making even a short stay in the Straits, as I entertained a strong desire to form a more intimate acquaintance with the Balinese. Since they have resisted the encroachments of the Dutch, we should have been enabled to learn from them the exact state of the agricultural population of the Archipelago, before the arrival of Europeans in this part of the world.

The Balinese entertaining a great aversion to a maritime life, are more rarely to be met with at the European ports than the natives of the other islands to the eastward. They are fairer in complexion, stouter in frame, and more energetic in their dispositions than the Javanese, and in appearance and dress bear a great resemblance to the natives of Siam, from whom it is probable that they are descended. The entire population of Bali, amounting to about one million, profess the Hindoo religion, and the burning of widows amongst them is carried to an extent unknown even in continental India. The slaves of a great man are also consumed upon his funeral pile, and



when the immense annual loss of life produced by these frightful practices is considered, it is surprising that the island possesses so large a population.

Lombok only differs from Bali in the circumstance of the natives professing the Mahomedan religion. The town of Bali Labogee, on the east side of the island, is more frequently visited by British ships than any other native port in the Archipelago, as vessels from New South Wales often call here on their voyage to China for the purchase of rice. In 1829 some Dutch cruizers visited this island and that of Bali, in order to buy slaves, which were required to recruit their army, and about one thousand were procured, at the rate of twenty dollars a head. They are also visited occasionally by French vessels from Bourbon for the same purpose.

The natives of both islands devote their whole attention to agriculture, and large quantities of rice are exported to China and the Archipelago. Hides, tobacco, coco-nut oil, and coffee, are also exported; the cotton produced in the island is of an excellent quality, being considered the best in Eastern India. It is manufactured into calico, but the tedious process of cleaning and spinning



the raw material renders it very expensive: British and Indian calicoes, therefore, meet with a ready sale.

An English gentleman, formerly a merchant at Batavia, has resided at this place for several years, and is treated with great respect and attention by the native chiefs. He owns two small vessels, with which he trades to the different ports in the island, paying an annual visit to Singapore, to dispose of part of his produce, and to procure a fresh supply of foreign goods.

Were Bali, Lombok, and some of the other free islands to be occasionally visited by British men-of-war on their voyage from New South Wales to India, refreshments in abundance could be procured for the crews, and the inhabitants would learn that another European maritime nation existed besides the Dutch, and this knowledge would be productive of mutual advantage.

In no country in the Archipelago would the labours of Christian missionaries be likely to receive a better reward than in Bali. Mahommedanism has as yet made little progress, but as there are many Arabs settled at Carrang Assam, the principal sea-port, if the field should be left



entirely to them, they will soon gain an ascendancy quite sufficient to prevent the introduction of Christianity. They have shewn themselves to be averse to the settlement of missionaries among them, and two individuals who endeavoured to form an establishment upon the island were desired to depart. No attempt has since been made to obtain a more permanent footing: the Americans, however, having lately introduced a medical missionary into Siam, with the most satisfactory results, the same plan might probably be pursued with equal success at Bali, which is subject to epidemics, since during the ravages of disease the advice and medicines of an European surgeon would of course be much valued. The natives would naturally regard with favour the individual from whom they received visible benefit, and their conversion would by the pursuance of this method be greatly facilitated; while the attempt, in the first place, to cram abstruse doctrines down their throats, would alarm their prejudices, and certainly be productive of failure.

At six P.M. on the 28th of November, we passed close to Banditti Island, at the south entrance of Lambok Straits, and entered the Indian Ocean.



The wind was now in our favour, and we bore away for the south coast of Java under as much canvass as could be carried with safety.

According to our instructions from the Dutch government, we were to proceed in the first place to a harbour near the centre of the south coast, at which a part, and perhaps the whole of our cargo was to be delivered.

On the 30th, from our longitude by chronometers, we were only a few miles to the eastward of that port, but as no correct survey had been made of the coast, we stood in for the land, and anchored under a point which afforded us some shelter from the swell. The boat with several men was then dispatched to a village situated at a short distance from the anchorage, to procure information, and in about an hour they returned, having learned that the port to which we were bound was thirty-five miles farther to the westward.

This village, which is called Aya, contains about two hundred inhabitants, who gain a subsistence by collecting the edible birds'-nests found in the neighbouring lime-stone caverns. We saw two small canoes, but these could only be used during some periods of the west monsoon, the surf on the beach being so heavy that it is seldom that a boat



can land. The arrival of a ship at this place is so rare an occurrence, that the natives were afraid that some calamity was about to happen, and under this apprehension the women and children fled into the interior; there being, however, only five men in the boat, the Jaxa, or head-man of the village, took courage and came to the shore, accompanied by several others, to communicate with the strangers.

At three in the afternoon we again set sail, and at dusk were off the eastern end of Nusa Kambangan, a moderately lofty island about twenty miles long, running parallel with the Java shore; round the west end of which the harbour of Cali Pujang is situated. During the night we anchored under the high land on the western part of the island to await the daylight, and although the wind was strong out at sea, we lay quite becalmed.

The entrance of the harbour is almost blocked up by a high round island, on each side of which is a narrow channel. In the chart, or rather sketch, of the harbour, which had been supplied to us by the government, the two channels were laid down as perfectly safe, and the eastern channel being nearest to the spot where we lay, an anchor was carried out to warp the ship in against the strong



ebb tide. We had no sooner entered the channel, than the ship struck on a sunken rock, and bumped so heavily, that had she not been a stout teak-built vessel, shipwreck would have been inevitable. After being on the rock several minutes, she forged off, and we ran for the other channel, meeting on our way with a large boat bringing off a pilot. The awkward manner in which they managed their vessel, plainly shewed that the natives of this part of the coast were very little acquainted with maritime affairs ; in coming alongside the ship the boat was as near as possible being capsized. The pilot, a little old Javanese, scrambled on board and appeared extremely thankful that he had not been thrown into the water. He was totally unacquainted with seamanship, but knew where the water was deep and where it was shallow, which was all that we required.

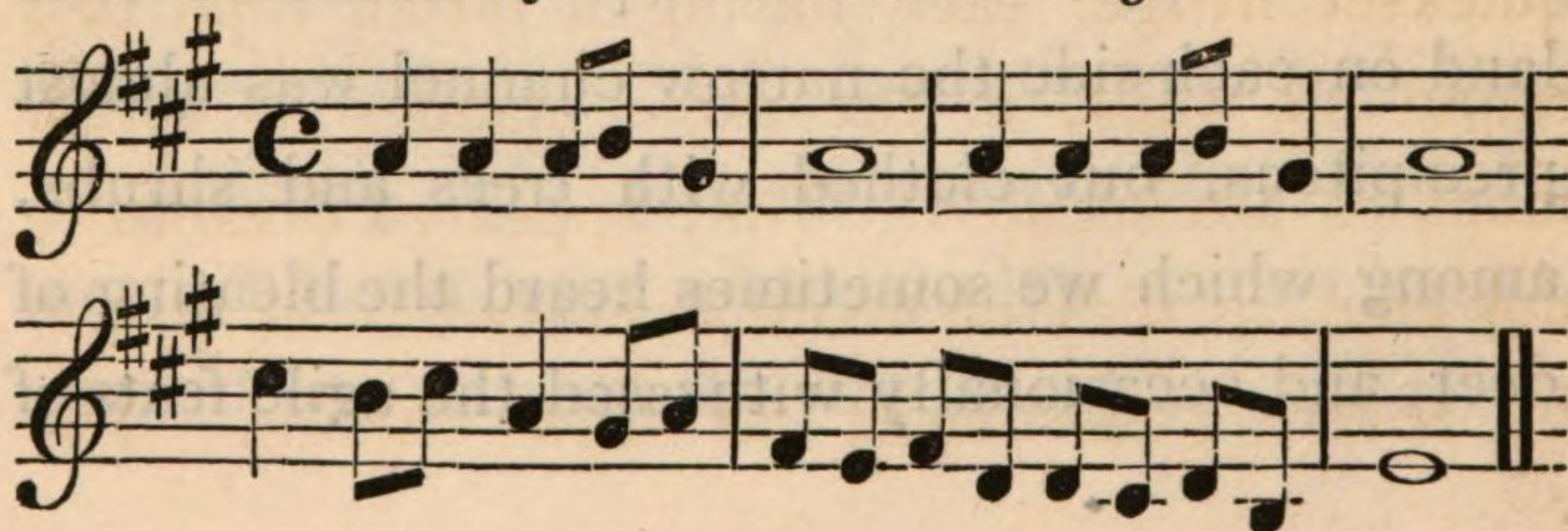
We now again commenced the tedious process of hauling the vessel along by means of ropes, and gradually advanced towards our anchorage, which was about four miles distant up the harbour. The land on each side the narrow channel was almost precipitous, but clothed with trees and shrubs, among which we sometimes heard the bleating of deer, and occasionally witnessed the agile feats of



monkeys. The following morning we passed the fort, and in the afternoon the vessel was moored about a stone's throw from the mouth of the little river, on the banks of which the town is situated.

Four moderate-sized boats, which, with a few canoes, formed the entire navy of the place, were sent down to assist our own boats in discharging the cargo. The seamen were delighted at the prospect of having so much boat-work, for although this part of their duty is more fatiguing than any other, they prefer it, in consequence of enjoying a greater degree of liberty when employed in a service which takes them out of the vessel. When by themselves, they generally row to a chorus, which exercises a very animating influence over them; but if there should be an European officer in the boat, a dead silence is maintained, a noise of any kind being considered disrespectful. Some of their songs are very melodious, and the sound produces a pleasing effect, when heard from a distance.

*Air of a Javanese Boat-song.*





The rains had now commenced in the interior, and the mountain torrents poured so considerable a body of water into the river, that it could only be ascended by the larger boats by means of ropes attached to the trees on the banks, the current being so strong as to render oars totally useless.

A day or two after our arrival, upon commencing work in the morning, the cutter was missed from the ship's stern, and on mustering the crew, Gummok and another Javanese, a carpenter, were nowhere to be found. Concluding that they had deserted, a boat was dispatched to the town to offer a reward for their apprehension, another being sent at the same time to search for the lost boat. The latter soon returned, the cutter having been found on the shores of the harbour, at a place in which the jungle seemed almost impenetrable. In the evening Gummok and his fellow delinquent were brought back, scratched from head to foot, as if they had been gamboling in a quickset hedge, each having a rattan rope tied round his waist, in the same manner in which monkeys are secured. They appeared dreadfully dejected, as they no doubt expected to be visited by severe punishment for their offence. The



*upases* (police-officers) who captured them, stated that Gummok had shewn an inclination to resist when overtaken, and had drawn forth his pocket-knife, with hostile intent, but submitted in consequence of an old blunderbuss being presented at him. The deserters were put in irons for the night, but in the morning the captain pardoned them, on their assurance that they would not again attempt to escape ; and to prevent them from having any opportunity of breaking their promise, they were obliged to sleep on the quarter-deck, the sentry being held responsible for their safe custody.

Captain B—— hitherto had taken measures for the performance of a *wyang*, or native play, on board the ship, for the entertainment of the crew, whenever she put into Sourabaya; and as the natives are doatingly fond of such amusements, it no doubt greatly contributed to the popularity of both ship and commander. The late stay of the ship at Sourabaya had been so short that no time could be afforded for it, and the entertainment was consequently postponed until her arrival at Cali Pujang.

As soon as she had discharged her cargo the ship was put in order, and preparations were made



for the entertainment. Musicians, dancers, and players were engaged, and all the respectable natives in the vicinity invited to be present. As we proposed to give a dinner upon the same day to the Dutch gentlemen of the fort, it was deemed expedient to employ a native hunter to procure some game, and a few charges of powder and ball were served out to him for the purpose. Before we could furnish him with the necessary ammunition, we were obliged to ask permission of the commandant, as without it we should have transgressed the law, by giving the smallest particle of powder or shot to a native. Our hunter proved tolerably successful, for the next day he brought down a small wild heifer, the produce of his gun. This lucky shot occasioned great delight to the steward, who had been in agonies lest there should be no meat for the dinner.

On the morning of the fête, the decks were cleared, and covered with awnings, and the quarter-deck decorated with flags and green boughs. After breakfast the musicians and *corps dramatique* came on board, and soon afterwards the company began to arrive in boats from all parts of the bay. Men, women, and children, dressed in their gayest costume, arrived in such numbers



that the decks were soon crowded. Each party brought small presents of fruit to assist in the banquet, and these were placed in a heap on the main deck, to be used when necessary.

As soon as the commandant and doctor arrived, with their respective ladies, the dancing commenced. The musicians, fifteen in number, with gongs, drums, cymbals, and stoccadas, were stationed near the main hatchway, opposite to the *élite* of the company, who occupied chairs on the quarter-deck, the intermediate space being left clear for the dancers. The dancing girls, three in number, were expensively dressed, and adorned with jewels. The *sarong*, or petticoat, swept the ground, but the upper part of the person was supplied with little covering, excepting a long narrow scarf thrown over the shoulders. After the music had preluded for about ten minutes, the *première danseuse* advanced upon the stage with a slow step, gently waving the arms, and moving all the joints, even to the tips of the fingers. Her performance was graceful, but very inanimate, every display of agility being scrupulously avoided: indeed, the feet were seldom put in requisition. She occasionally stopped short, and raising the end of her scarf to her mouth, sang



forth a few words at the top of her voice. She thus continued, alternately singing and dancing, for about a quarter of an hour, when her companions advanced and performed in their turn.

After this prelude, however, the scene became more animated, for the musicians quickened the tune, and many of the seamen, particularly those who had handsome dresses, joined in the dance. These amateur performers, with their hands resting on their hips, their elbows squared, and their heads bent downwards as they gazed upon their feet—a practice to which English rustics are much addicted when similarly engaged—*chasséed* to the right and left with a sort of hornpipe step, every performer deeming it necessary to assume the most funereal gravity of countenance. Some of the young men from the shore also joined in the dance, and even the old pilot, who had come on board with his numerous family of children and grandchildren, commenced a *pas-de-deux* with one of the dancing-girls, and would doubtless have distinguished himself, had not his wife, annoyed by the bewitching glances which he sometimes cast at his partner, given him a smart tug behind, which brought him to the deck, and caused him to retire to his seat completely crest-fallen.



Somebody called out from the crowd that Gummok, the jungle-man, wanted to dance, and he was pushed forward to the quarter-deck; but he cut so sorry a figure in consequence of having disposed of his holiday suit previous to his late excursion into the interior, that he was sent away to be dressed in a more becoming manner. In a short time he was again introduced, but his shipmates had made so complete a fright of him, that he afforded no little amusement. These wags had dressed him in all the colours of the rainbow, the costume being completed by a large black south-wester, (a chapeau bearing a close resemblance to a coal-heaver's hat) placed upon his enormous bullet head. Gummok, however, commenced the dance with great confidence, and we were surprised to find that he was by far the most graceful performer in the ship, male or female, a discovery which contributed not a little to raise him in the estimation of his shipmates, for in Java, dancing forms an accomplishment in which lords and princes delight to excel.

At four o'clock, dinner was served up on deck to the natives. It consisted of curries, kabobs, pillaus, stewed fish, and mountains of boiled rice. We did not ourselves dine until a few hours



later, wishing to avoid as much as possible any interference with the comforts of the native guests.

The commandant and his party retired about nine o'clock, and at their departure I went down to the main-deck to witness the dramatic entertainment, being by virtue of my office admitted behind the scenes. A transparent screen of considerable dimensions was hung up to the beams, behind which a large lamp had been suspended. The puppets, about a hundred in number, were grotesque figures of men and women with dragons' heads and cloven feet, together with bulls and alligators, all most hideous to behold. They were about a foot high, cut out of pieces of buffalo hide, and painted and gilded, each having a piece of bamboo attached to it, by which it was stuck into a large plantain stem to be ready for use.

The play consisted of a recitation of the adventures of one of the ancient Javanese princes, and upon each character being mentioned, the figure which represented it was held before the lamp, so that its shadow, thus thrown upon the transparent screen, became visible to the audience. The recitation was made in a dull monotonous tone, but the speaker raised his voice occasionally when the adventures became particularly interest-



ing. The audience, without the exception of a single individual, listened with intense interest to the narration, nothing attracting their attention from it for an instant. During the evening we had occasion for the butler, and after some difficulty the gunner succeeded in getting him on deck, but his mind was so occupied with the adventures of the prince while attacking the fiery buffalo, or while rescuing the princess from the jaws of the alligator, that we could not make him understand what we wanted; and I was eventually obliged to take the keys from him, and search for it myself, sending him down again to the *wyang*. The legend was very long, and daylight found the audience, with few exceptions, listening as attentively as at the commencement.

I had an opportunity, during my stay at this place, of seeing several of the Orang Gunung, or hill people, at Cali Pujang, who had come from the interior to purchase salt. They were more powerful but less active than the natives of the coast, and could be as easily distinguished among them as a west-country excavator amid the inhabitants of London. During their visits to the coast, they endeavoured to cram themselves with information wherewith to amuse their friends at



home, and the following anecdote, which was related to me by a Javanese at Cali Pujang, will serve to illustrate not only their great simplicity, but also the incorrectness of the view which they sometimes take of the strange sights which they meet with in their travels.

A young man from one of the inland provinces came down for some purpose to the south coast of Java, where a heavy sea is always tumbling in upon the land from the Indian ocean. On arriving at the sea-shore, he was amazed at the sight which presented itself, for the waves came rolling in, apparently endeavouring to jump on each other's backs, and dashing with the greatest fury against the beach. This state of affairs being so different from the quiet inland waters which had hitherto been the object of his contemplation, he concluded that there must be a battle-royal going on among the billows, and with some trepidation filled his bottle with the fighting water to show to his friends at home. When he returned to his native village, the inhabitants crowded about him to hear an account of his adventures. After relating the perils he had encountered on his journey to the coast, he proceeded to describe the appearance of the sea.



“When I approached the great sea,” said he, “I heard a noise like the roaring of bulls, and I saw that there was a great battle of the waters. They were not quiet and peaceable like those of our lake, but were tearing and fighting, aye! fighting like tigers and buffaloes.” The gaping audience was struck with astonishment. The Jaxa, who was the oldest, and therefore considered the wisest man in the village, at last found his speech. “Beware, young man,” said he, “how you endeavour to impose upon us. Waters fight!! Are we goats, or are we buffalo-calves, that you tell us this? What is there to make the waters of the great sea fight, any more than those of our lake? I have seen the sea myself, when I went to eat the wind\* on the top of the Taggal mountain, and it was as smooth as a paddy field.” The traveller looked around him with a triumphant glance, and requested one of the women to bring him a bottle she would find in his bag. “Now,” said he, “I expected that the extraordinary fact would be doubted, and I therefore procured a bottle of the water; bring me a basin, and you may judge for yourselves.” The listeners crowded about him,

\* *Makkan angin*, literally eat the wind, but it is applied to taking the air.



and happy was he or she who could procure a near view of the proceedings. With a sneer at the ignorance of his countrymen, the man who had seen the world, drew the stopper from the bottle, and after a moment's hesitation in order to acquire courage, poured the water into the basin. To his utter amazement and discomfiture, the water "wouldn't fight," but lay quite still, as if it had never been pugnacious. The Jaxa, who from the confidence displayed by the traveller, had begun to fear that he had been premature in his doubts, and that his consequence as the village oracle would therefore be lowered, now denounced the poor man as a vile impostor, and pushed his 'vantage ground so strongly, that the luckless experimentalist was glad to shut himself up in the house to avoid the reproaches of his townsmen: even here, however, he was not safe, for his wife, who had expected that his discovery of the fighting water would exalt her husband to a post of honour, and cause him to be regarded as the leading man of science in the village, (the president, in fact, of the Royal Society of the place,) vented her disappointment on him in the shape of a curtain lecture, and, thus badgered upon all sides, the luckless traveller wished that he had drowned himself



in the fighting water before he had said anything about it.

As soon as the seamen had recovered from the fatigue of the entertainment, active preparations were made for our departure, by taking on board ballast and water.

On the 12th of December, I accompanied Captain B—— to dine at the fort with the commandant and the doctor. The commandant had been born in Java, and was not much fairer in complexion than the natives. He was a mild, unassuming young man, and appeared to act entirely according to the wishes of the doctor, a boisterous Dutchman, whom we suspected had been sent with him as a sort of dry-nurse. The store-keeper was not present: he also was a Dutchman, and had risen from the ranks to his present employment, having been for several years a private soldier. He was a rough unpolished man, but possessed much goodness of heart, and was greatly beloved by the natives: he lived quite alone in the town, that is to say, he had no European with him.

Our dinner did not derive much assistance from European luxuries, with the exception of claret; even bread was dispensed with, the substitute



being a plate of rice, boiled hard, and placed beside each individual. After dinner we took a walk in the environs of the fort, and the doctor pointed out a spot in which he intended to form a coffee plantation; for the soil of the island appearing to be well adapted for the growth of that production, he had obtained a grant of land of considerable extent from the government, and had also been promised the loan of funds, without which he could not commence the cultivation. Coffee was formerly grown to a considerable extent on Nusa Kambangan, but the monopoly of the article by government has been so distasteful to the natives, that the plantations are neglected. We saw several trees under which a number of berries were lying.

During the evening the Dutch soldiers in the fort, of whom there were about twenty, having procured some bottles of arrack, commenced one of those concerts which are proverbial for their discordance, and made so frightful a noise that we were glad to return to the ship.

In the night, one of the seamen suddenly started on his feet, and then fell dead on the deck. I was immediately called up, and endeavoured to render him assistance by opening a vein in his



arm; the poor fellow was, however, past all surgery. His death was apparently caused by apoplexy, for he had not suffered from previous illness. The crew were tolerably free from sickness, more so indeed than we could have hoped for, as the ship lay close to an extensive jungle, which was covered at high water.

Nusa Kambangan, or the floating island, is about twenty miles long, but in the centre not more than three broad. The water between it and Java being very shallow, there is no channel yet known for vessels to pass out from the harbour to the eastward. The fort stands upon the west end of the island, and as a place of defence is certainly most absurdly situated. It is erected on the pitch of a steep hill rising from the harbour, and on the land side is overlooked from the top of the hill. It only defends the channel by which no vessel is likely to enter, and a ship may easily get into the outer harbour by the large channel, totally unobserved by the people in the fort, as an island, two hundred feet high, lies directly in the way.

The fort stands quite alone, without any habitation in the vicinity, the town, and government store, being situated on the banks of the river about six miles distant. The buildings at this



place are wholly composed of wood and reeds, for were more substantial houses required, it would be necessary to bring both workmen and materials from the northern part of the island. It does not contain more than two hundred inhabitants, all of whom, with the exception of the storekeeper, are unmixed Javanese.

The natives of this part of the island have had very little communication with foreigners, and are consequently in much the same state, as far as regards their manners and customs, as they were before the arrival of Europeans in the Archipelago. There are no Chinese, Arabs, or half-castes among them, from whom they can learn foreign modes and arts; but although less advanced in civilization, they are much superior in point of morality to the natives of the north coast. They entertain an inordinate respect for Europeans, of whose physical and mental capabilities they have formed the most extravagant notions.

The country in the immediate vicinity of the settlement is far from being populous, although the soil is extremely rich, much more so than that of the Sunda or western districts; but Banyu Mas, an adjacent province, under the immediate government of a native chief, is the



most populous, and the most productive in the island.

Criminal offences seldom occur, and the fear of the Dutch is so great, that evasions of the revenue duties are rarely attempted. During our stay at Cali Pujang, it was suspected that some of the salt had been embezzled, and sold by the crew of one of the boats : but the doctor said that it was absolutely impossible, for not a single native dared to purchase it. However, on our arrival at Batavia, by accounts received from Cali Pujang, it appeared that the suspicions were correct, and there is little doubt that the offenders suffered severely for their indiscretion. Too great confidence, however, must not be placed upon the present submissive state of the natives, for should they find the burthens imposed upon them insupportable, the reaction would be proportionally great.

Foreign commerce not being permitted, the natives have no encouragement to produce a greater quantity of any article than they require for home consumption. The only exported produce of the land is a small quantity of coffee, which is monopolized by the government, and even this would not be cultivated if it could be avoided.

Rice, which is their principal food, is grown in



sufficient quantities for their own use. The *taggal*, or upland rice is preferred : it has a reddish tinge, and is supposed to be much more nutritious than that grown on wet lands. The latter can be cultivated with much greater facility, but as it is not required for exportation the former is preferred. Very little cotton is grown in the neighbourhood of Cali Pujang, for the calicoes with which the natives are clothed are mostly purchased from the inhabitants of the interior provinces, who receive salt-fish in exchange.

The Dutch establishment is small, although this is the principal settlement on the south coast, indeed there are only two others, Patchitan towards the eastern end, and Jacanza near the western end of the island. It consists of a commandant, a doctor, and about forty soldiers, who reside in the fort, and a storekeeper who takes charge of the stores. The latter is assisted in his duties by a native *jerratulis* or secretary, and about a dozen *upases*, who act in the capacities of officers of the police and customs. This establishment is sufficient for the accomplishment of the ends in view, which are, to enforce the monopolies and prevent a foreign commerce.

The principal revenue of the government is



derived from the monopoly of salt. The sheet of water between Nusa Kambangan and the Main forming the only part on the south coast in which a fisherman can uninterruptedly pursue his avocations, many of the inhabitants of its shores are employed in catching and curing fish for the consumption of the natives of the interior, and large quantities of salt are consequently required. The price charged by government is about five times the amount of the cost when delivered at the stores, and it consequently proves a severe tax. In addition to the salt employed in the fishery, every native consumes annually at least two piculs (two hundred and sixty-six pounds), and as the government derives a profit of about one pound sterling from this source, it presses very heavily upon the poorer people, it being a large sum when the value of money is considered.

A revenue is also derived from the collection of edible birds' nests, found in the limestone caverns upon the coasts. On entering the harbour, I perceived a small hut, perched upon the steep side of one of the heads, and upon making an enquiry concerning it, was informed that it had been erected for the residence of the men who guarded the *sarong burung* (birds' nests), which



abound in an extensive cavern in the immediate vicinity, this hut having been constructed at the mouth of one of these subterraneous recesses.

The manufacturers of the nests, so greatly in esteem in China, are small swallows, which are supposed to collect the glutinous substance of which they are composed from the sea. The nests resemble small tea-saucers in form, the rim being about the size of that of a tumbler. The best, that is those collected before the eggs of the bird have been laid, are of a light red colour, and nearly transparent, bearing almost a perfect resemblance to isinglass, except that they are rather more brittle. China is almost the only market for this delicacy, the nests being greatly in demand throughout the Celestial Empire, in consequence of their supposed nutritious qualities. They are of three different degrees of excellence, and the best kind is sold in China at the rate of nine shillings an ounce. When used for culinary purposes they are dissolved in water, and made into a tasteless soup. I have eaten them several times at the tables of rich Chinese, but must confess that they did not strike me as being at all agreeable to the palate : in fact it is difficult to distinguish the slightest flavour. The collection



of these nests is a work of danger and difficulty : they are taken periodically, and it is necessary to station proper persons at the mouths of the caverns to prevent the birds from being disturbed by intruders.

Wild animals abound in the vicinity of Cali Pujang, great numbers of deer, wild-hogs, wild cattle, with a tiger occasionally, being to be met with by those who are fond of field-sports. We were shown the head and horns of an enormous wild bull, which had been killed on the spot on which the fort is erected, at the time that the artificers were employed upon the work. In consequence of this circumstance the fort has been named Bantan Mati, the dead wild ox. The deer are either taken in nooses or are killed by large stones thrown upon them, by men who watch for the purpose at the watering places to which they resort. A formidable quadruped, which, according to the description, must have been a rhinoceros, an animal which the natives hold in the greatest dread, had been seen several times upon the main land opposite the fort.

Numbers of large black apes, called *lutons*, crowded the trees near the anchorage, about the time of low water, for the purpose of catching



crabs and craw-fish, which form their principal food. The natives assert that they put their long tails into the holes inhabited by the crabs, pulling them out when the latter bite. They also assert that the monkeys' tails are sometimes held fast, and the animal consequently drowned when the tide rises. That their tails may occasionally slip into the holes by accident, and be seized by the inmates, is very possible; but to suppose that they put them there on purpose, is giving them credit for more stoicism than even the monkeykind can be expected to display.

I purchased an animal of this species in passing Anjer, which became a great favourite, but I was induced to give it away to a friend at Sourabaya. It was nearly the size of a fox, with spare limbs, a tail about two feet long, the body being covered with long shining black hair. In disposition the *lutons* are totally dissimilar to the common monkeys, for they have no mischievous propensities, but may be considered steady, sober animals. The one in my possession had been caught only a few days before the purchase was made; nevertheless, it did not exhibit any wild or savage propensities, and I only knew it to bite on one occasion, and then not maliciously. The *lutons*, when



in a state of confinement, frequently utter low melancholy whoops, which sound very dolefully.

The name of Cali Pujang has been given by the Dutch to the harbour, but, properly speaking, it belongs exclusively to the river, on which the government stores are situated. It forms the only safe roadstead on the south coast of Java, and is superior to any which the island affords. There are but two others, Sourabaya, and Merak harbour (in the Straits of Sunda), which can be pronounced perfectly safe in all weathers; and of these, Sourabaya cannot be entered by ships of large draught of water, while Merak is too small to afford shelter to any considerable number of vessels. Cali Pujang, on the contrary, could contain the whole British navy, and may be entered with facility by the largest vessels. We found the navigation of the channel very tedious, but for purposes of shelter there is no occasion to proceed so far as the spot in which our vessel was secured, for the anchorage is perfectly safe immediately inside the heads. When it shall have become a place of importance (and no doubt it will be so at some future period,) the town will probably be erected close to the mouth of the harbour.



In Milburn's 'Oriental Commerce,' an exceedingly valuable work, in which the trade of the most insignificant native ports is detailed at length, the south coast of Java, the richest island in the Archipelago, comprising an extent of upwards of six hundred miles, is passed over with the following brief notice :—“The south coast of Java does not contain any places of trade, and being seldom visited, is but little known. There are several bays, but the greater part of the coast is inaccessible, from the heavy surf constantly beating upon it.” Had there been any trade, it would have been mentioned ; but in consequence of the system which has precluded commercial enterprise wherever the Dutch government has held the ascendance, no materials were afforded for a longer paragraph. The account of the commerce on the west coast of Sumatra, which we find in the same work, a coast which is quite as much exposed to the inconveniences arising from the difficulty of landing, as that of the western portion of Java, while the country naturally is not nearly so productive, occupies nine pages.

In the event of the present restrictions on commerce being removed, Cali Pujang must become a port of vast importance, for being



situated in the close vicinity of the most productive districts, and at the same time so easy of access, it will doubtless be made the great resort of foreign shipping. The south-east monsoon blows close up to the mouth of the harbour, during the greater part of the year, indeed often throughout the whole year, and therefore the adverse winds and calms, which cause so much delay in proceeding to the ports on the north coast, would here be avoided by ships from Europe and Australia. In coming from Western Australia, in the *Monkey*, we might have entered this port in exactly half the time which we required to reach Batavia.

How much it is to be regretted that the Dutch did not pursue a different line of policy with regard to the island of Java! If, instead of their monopolizing system, which has deluged the country with blood, and been the source of misery to thousands, they had brought forward the natives and given encouragement to industry by permitting a moderate freedom of commerce, Java would now have proved an unfailing source of profit to the mother country, adding considerably to her strength, as well as to her riches. The Dutch possessed excellent materials to work



upon, an island blessed with, perhaps, the richest soil in the whole universe, well situated for ready communication with every part of the world, and occupied by a mild industrious people, inclined to look up to Europeans with respect, in consequence of their being more advanced in civilisation than themselves. With such advantages, it was in their power to have made the island a paradise instead of a desert. Their deplorable system, however, is working its own retribution: the Dutch authorities look at their empty coffers, and perceive their error, an error which it is too late for them to retrieve, although we may still hope that the natives of Java will receive from other hands the benefits so long denied them by their short-sighted and selfish rulers.

On the 16th we unmoored and got ready for sea, and the next day sailed for Batavia. During the latter part of my stay at Cali Pujang, I had been very unwell, and expected an attack of fever, which made me determine to proceed to Singapore by the first ship bound thither from Batavia.

The south-east monsoon still prevailed on the south coast, and we advanced rapidly towards



Batavia. On the 20th December we passed Krokatoa and entered Sunda straits, and on the 23d, anchored in Batavia roads. The Dutch ship *Theodora* was to sail in a few days for Singapore, and I procured a passage in her.

Before taking leave of the beautiful island of Java, and its interesting inhabitants, I cannot help expressing a wish that we may hereafter become better acquainted with them. The conduct of the British towards its Indian subjects has not always been of the most meritorious description, but during our occupation of Java, the colonial government was administered by one who well understood and appreciated the character and disposition of the natives. The measures pursued by the late Sir Stamford Raffles, the governor, are indeed beyond all praise, and both as a statesman and a philanthropist, he stands unrivalled. He is remembered by the natives with feelings little short of adoration, and the illiberality of the government to which they are now subjected, only tends to make them the more regret the misfortune which deprived them of a father and a friend. The name of Sir Stamford Raffles is, perhaps, almost unknown to



nine-tenths of the people of England, but scarcely a native of Java is to be found who does not remember some anecdote relative to the kindness and consideration with which the people were treated by him during his most popular administration, of a country very unadvisedly relinquished to a selfish and barbarous tyranny. It is impossible to contemplate this interesting country without feelings of the deepest indignation, since from neither Holland nor England has it received justice. The reckless and ungenerous manner in which the natives of Java were delivered over to their former oppressors, without a single clause for the security of better treatment in future, after having during several years been permitted to consider themselves British subjects, has rendered our occupation of Java very destructive to the happiness of the people. The advantages which they experienced under the mild and beneficent policy adopted towards them, contrasted with their present misery and degradation, render their condition intolerable. They feel it with tenfold force, striving at intervals, though in vain, to free themselves from a yoke which has become too heavy for them to bear. Thus, many of the



natives of the interior, though naturally of the mildest and most docile disposition, goaded to desperation, rise year after year in arms against their tyrants, losing life or liberty in a hopeless struggle for independence.



## CHAPTER IV.

### VOYAGE FROM JAVA TO SINGAPORE.

Embark and Sail for Singapore.—Dutch Invalids returning Home.—Palo Babi.—Passengers.—The East Coast of Sumatra.—Weather.—Enter Banca Straits.—Fall in with a Chinese Junk.—A Javan Chinese Passenger.—Scenes in the Straits.—Stillness of the Jungle.—Savage Inhabitants of Sumatra.—Banca.—Inhabitants.—Tin Mines.—Palembang.—Anecdote of its Capture by the British.—Enter Rhio Straits.—Ban Ok, the Capitan China of Rhio.—Present State of the Settlement.—Continue the Voyage to Singapore.—Ship Touches on the Rocks.—Arrival at Singapore.

On the 27th of December, after a stay of only four days at Batavia, I embarked on board the *Theodora*, and when day broke the next morning, the anchor was weighed, and we stood out of the roads with a strong westerly wind.

Two Dutch merchantmen, bound to Holland, sailed in company with us, and one of them, a fine frigate-built ship, ranged up alongside and spoke us. She had a party of invalided soldiers on board, who were returning to Europe. They were glad, no doubt, to escape from a place in which



they had seen so many of their comrades carried off by the malignant climate; but their joy was silent, for they sat in a group upon their beds and boxes, which had been placed in the long-boat, and appeared as motionless as statues; excepting that occasionally one would half turn his head to take a parting look at the place in which he had probably experienced many days of sickness and sorrow. They all appeared to have been recently taken out of the hospital, indeed the government was too much in want of soldiers to send away any excepting those whose recovery in the country was considered to be absolutely hopeless. Several sat with their heads resting on their knees, and appeared as if the act of mercy had arrived too late to save them from the fate that would certainly have awaited them had they remained.

There are comparatively few Dutch-born soldiers under the Batavian government; the majority, even of the officers, being Germans, Prussians, or Belgians.

The westerly monsoon was now blowing in full strength, and as the captain had determined to make for the coast of Sumatra before he ran to the northward, we had several days' beating among the



numerous small islands which are scattered over this part of the Java sea.

These islands, or rather islets, for few are more than two or three miles in circumference, are of coral formation, and so thickly wooded that it is absolutely impossible to penetrate the jungle; while the decay of vegetable matter upon them is so great as to render the atmosphere actually poisonous. During the British occupation of Java, sickness prevailed among the troops at Batavia to such an extent, that it was considered necessary to remove the patients, and a considerable number were sent to one of the islands off the roads as an experiment: the increased mortality, however, which ensued, caused the place to be immediately abandoned. The seamen who die on board the ships are not buried near the town, but are interred by their shipmates on one of these islands, and the noxious exhalations are so dreaded, that after depositing the body in a shallow grave, and reading a few hurried prayers, the mourners are glad to hasten away from the pestiferous neighbourhood.

On December 30th we passed Palo Babi, the easternmost of the islands, and being favoured during the ensuing night with a south-west wind, we found ourselves on the morning of the 31st



close under Knob-hill, on the coast of Sumatra.\* We now bore away to the northward, and passing between the Brothers and the Shahbunder shoal, soon lost sight of Sumatra, for although the coast line was parallel to our course, the shoals prevented our approaching sufficiently near to get a view of its low swampy shores.

The captain and the chief officer of the *Theodora*, were natives of Denmark, but they both had attained a considerable acquaintance with the English language. I was fortunate in having a very desirable fellow passenger in a Captain Collins, a gentleman who had been several years in command of a British Government vessel in the Straits of Malacca. He was an intelligent seaman, and I was enabled to gather much information from him concerning the Malays of the straits, with whose character he was well acquainted.†

\* It is rather singular, that on the 31st of December 1834 I was within a mile or two of the same spot, on my voyage from Singapore to England.

† Both Captain Kock and Captain Collins met their deaths within the ensuing year. The former died of a fever in Java, and the latter was drowned by the capsizing of a boat on the west coast of Sumatra. I have heard that the chief officer of the *Theodora*, an old man, has also departed this life. These events will give some idea of the casualties which occur in this part of the world, but they certainly afford rather an unfavourable example.



The weather was perfectly delightful. During the prevalence of the south-east monsoon, the sky is clear, and the heat throughout the day almost oppressive, but at this period the clouds generally screened us from the sun's rays, rendering the temperature nearly the same as that of a cloudy summer's day in England, while twenty-four hours rarely passed without a shower of rain. The quarter-deck being shaded by an awning, the edges, during these showers, were lowered down to form a kind of penthouse ; so that we could sit on deck and enjoy the breeze, and at the same time be sheltered from the rain.

On the 3d of January, we entered the Straits of Banca, and the navigation now became as intricate as that of the Thames ; but unlike the latter, there were here no regular tides to enable us to advance when the wind was contrary. We lay three days off the first point, unable to move, and during this detention several ships and prahus shot past on their way to the southward, while the strong current from the China sea came rushing against our bows with such force that we expected to lose an anchor.

While wind-bound at this place, a Chinese Junk, the only one, I believe, that now goes to Java,



passed close by us. A considerable number of the crew were standing on the high thatched habitation erected on their quarter-deck, and perceiving a Chinese passenger whom we had on board, they all hailed together to demand the state of the markets ; but they asked so many questions at once, that our friend became quite bewildered, and the junk passed astern before he could decide to which he should first reply. Even if he had spoken, the junk people could not have profited by his efforts, for they continued bawling until quite out of hearing. This junk, which was about two hundred tons burthen, carried two immense mat sails, with a number of small yards extending along them, giving them the appearance of bats'-wings. She passed us quickly on account of the current being in her favour ; but although the breeze was strong she went slowly through the water, and might be deemed little better than an unwieldy hulk.

Our Chinese passenger had been born in Java ; in fact he could only be called half a Chinese, for his mother was a Javan ; nevertheless he could scarcely be distinguished from a thorough-bred Chinaman. He had goods on board to the amount of about £1,000 sterling, which he was taking to



Singapore to dispose of. I frequently held long conversations with this person, who was glad to be taken notice of, and willingly gave me all the information I required. His faculties were not of the first order, but he appeared to have sense enough to carry him comfortably through the world. The poor man was not treated with much consideration, he and his servant being obliged to take up their quarters in the long-boat, in which they sheltered themselves as well as they could with *kadjang* mats.

Neither did the Javanese seamen lead a very comfortable life during the passage; for as it was necessary to take advantage of every puff of favourable wind, it often happened that the ship was got under weigh and anchored again several times during the day. Our skipper not being a very pushing man, they in general enjoyed their night's rest; and it unfortunately happened that we were most favoured by the wind during the period of their repose.

The Straits of Banca are rather more than a hundred miles long, and in the narrowest part the Banca and Sumatra shores approach within seven miles of each other. Banca has a very picturesque appearance, the hills near the shore being



covered with trees and herbage, while, in the interior, a mountain of considerable elevation, Gunung Maraj, raises its head above the neighbouring eminences.

On the other side of the strait, the Sumatra shore offers as tame and uninteresting a prospect as it is possible for land to present. From Knob Hill, near the south-east extremity of Sumatra, to Batacarang Point, at the northern entrance of Banca Straits, a distance of more than three hundred miles, not a single hill, nor even a tree\* higher than its fellows, affords a variety to relieve the eye, wearied with the dull monotony of the scene. Frequently, during days together, our vessel lay so near to the land, that we might have easily discerned what was passing on it, but neither man, bird, nor any living creature appeared within our view. On one occasion I approached close to the shore in a boat, in hopes of procuring some game, but returned unsuccessful. A solemn stillness prevailed throughout the jungle, forcibly reminding me of the popular fable of the Upas tree of Java, and its desolate

\* In Horsburg's chart, a large tree is marked down on one of the low points, and it is anxiously looked for by strangers who pass the Straits; but this, the only distinguishing mark on the western shore, has disappeared.



wildernesses around. This dreary region, however, is not destitute of inhabitants, being scantily peopled by a savage race of Malays, who are located far up the numerous muddy creeks, and who rarely make their appearance, except when a vessel is thrown on the coast, in which event they flock around her in their little canoes, like gulls about a dead whale, and soon succeed either in capturing or in driving away the crew. The vessel is then plundered, and afterwards burnt for the sake of the iron fastenings. The crews of vessels which fall into the hands of these people are taken up into the country, and kept in a state of bondage, from which escape is utterly hopeless, being detained at a great distance from the sea, in a part of the country totally unknown to strangers, and thus cut off for ever from all communication with the rest of the world.\*

On the 15th of January, we showed colours to the fort of Minto, the principal establishment

\* Some years ago, a British frigate, or sloop of war, was capsized in a squall near the Sumatra shore of the Straits. It is impossible to say what number of the crew succeeded in reaching the land, the fate of two alone having been ascertained. These men were picked up while floating on a piece of wreck, by a Malay prahu, and taken into Palembang, where the Dutch resident ransomed them, and caused them to be forwarded to one of the British Indian settlements.



of the Dutch on Banca. The town, which is small, and contains no European inhabitants, excepting those on the government establishment, is situated near the westernmost point of the island, a high round hill, called Monopin Hill, rising immediately behind it. Captain Collins had visited both Minto and Palembang when commanding an English East-India Company's cutter, but he did not appear to entertain a favourable opinion of either place.

The Dutch have three minor settlements on the island of Banca ; two on the shores of the strait, one being at Tampelang, another at St. Paul's Mount, and the third in the deep bay of Klabbat, on the northern part of the island. They are established here for the purpose of enforcing the monopolies of tin and pepper, the only exportable productions of the island. There is a little private trade at Minto, a few Javan-Arab ships calling annually on their voyage to Palembang ; but the other ports are only visited by the ships employed by government to take the tin to Batavia.

The tin of Banca is considered to be of excellent quality, and superior to that of any other part of the Archipelago, advantages which are perhaps



principally owing to the smelting works being under the superintendence of the government, since adulteration consequently can be in a great measure prevented. The ore is found mixed with earth in veins which are only a few feet below the surface.\* The principal mines occur at the foot of Gunung Maraj, at which place streams of water are dammed up for the purpose of washing the earth from the metal. I have mentioned pepper as an exportable article, but the quantity raised is so small that it scarcely deserves notice.

Banca is inhabited by four distinct races of people. The *orang gunung* or hill-people, the aborigines of the country, are established in the interior, where they lead a wild kind of life, but are submissive to the regulations established for their government. The sea-coasts are occupied by Malays, who have emigrated from Sumatra: they are extremely indolent, all the labour, either in cultivating pepper, or working the mines, being performed by the Chinese, the population from the Celestial Empire consisting of between fifteen and twenty thousand souls. The *orang laut*

\* The process of mining and of washing the metal is precisely similar to that described in my visit to the gold-mines of Borneo.



or sea-people, who are similar in their habits to the Badjus, found upon the coasts of Borneo and Celebes, though belonging to it, can scarcely be said to inhabit the island, for they live entirely in their little prahus, and wander about the coasts. They subsist principally by fishing, and it is said that they are always ready to give information to the piratical rovers.

The Dutch have also a settlement at Palembang, a town situated on the banks of one of the largest rivers in Sumatra, the mouth being immediately opposite to Minto. During the British occupation of Java, the Sultan of Palembang caused all the Dutch in the town to be massacred, thinking that by this summary method he would be enabled to rid himself entirely of European influence; but the British government at Batavia, horror-struck by the atrocity of his conduct, despatched a force for the purpose of evincing their displeasure at the crime, and their determination to punish it, under the command of Colonel Gillespie, who, in the execution of this duty, performed one of the most gallant exploits upon record. The force consisted of several vessels of war, and a large body of troops. On ascending the river, a battery of one hundred large guns flanked by armed vessels,



surrendered without firing a shot, and the Sultan, terrified at the approach of the British, fled into the interior with his treasure. With the news of his flight, the British commandant was informed that the Malays had risen, and were slaughtering the Chinese and other foreign settlers. Colonel Gillespie, anxious to put a stop to these frightful outrages, embarked with a small number of grenadiers in a few light boats, leaving orders for a larger force to follow immediately. When the little party approached the town, darkness had already set in, and the shrieks and outcries plainly evinced that the work of carnage had commenced. The Colonel and his party, which consisted of ten persons himself included, landed undismayed among a vast multitude of blood-thirsty wretches, who, paralyzed at the boldness of the action, allowed their opponents to enter the palace, where they were soon afterwards joined by a small reinforcement. At midnight, about three hours after the arrival of the first party, the main body of troops entered the place, and a town defended by forts and batteries mounting two hundred and fifty peices of cannon, was taken possession of without the loss of a single life. The following



day saw order restored, and a new Sultan was soon afterwards placed upon the throne.

Palembang was again occupied by the Dutch on the restoration of Java, and they draw a considerable revenue from the monopoly of salt, which is imported from Java ; and from that of pepper, which is brought down in large quantities from the plantations in the interior.

Foreigners from every part of the Archipelago are settled at this place, but the Arabs are predominant, the Sultan and all the nobles being of Arab descent. The race indeed has mixed so intimately with the natives, that a large proportion of the Malay inhabitants have Arab blood in their veins. As in all places wherein the Arabs have permanently established themselves, the moral character of the natives has been totally destroyed, the Malays of Palembang being far inferior in this point to the cannibal Battas of the interior.

The Arabs have introduced several useful arts into Palembang, particularly that of brass-founding, in which the people of the country excel. But even this occupation has been diverted from the channel of utility to be made subservient



to injurious aggressions upon the persons and property of others, the brass-founders being chiefly employed in the manufacture of *lelahs* or swivel guns, with which all the piratical prahus in the Archipelago are armed.

On the 20th we passed Tanjong Batacarrang, a point on the Sumatran shore, and at last entered the China Sea. At noon a large ship was seen bearing down towards us, and when she neared us, she hoisted Danish colours at the peak, much to the delight of our captain, who immediately concluded that she was commanded by an old friend, his ship being the only one of that nation known to be in these seas. His conjectures were correct, and in a short time the stranger rounded to under our lee, when the captain went on board with some letters and presents for his friends at Copenhagen.

After beating about for some days against contrary winds, on the 31st we entered the narrow strait of Rhio, and on the 2d of February anchored off the Dutch town of the same name on the island of Bintang. The part of the strait on which the town is situated, has all the appearance of an inland lake. In the vicinity are several little green islands, with native houses erected on



them, in the midst of plantain and other fruit-trees; and occasionally a small canoe may be seen shooting from behind one of them and standing towards the town. There was no appearance of commercial activity. A solitary ship was lying at anchor near the town, but not a soul appeared to be stirring on board; and the long wooden jetty was only occupied by the native crew of a Dutch war-prahu, who were lazily mending their sails.

I was introduced by the captain to an individual of whom I had often heard honourable mention, Ban Ok, the Capitan China of Rhio, whose hospitality and benevolence are exercised indiscriminately to all who approach him, without distinction either of country or colour. We found him seated in his godown or warehouse, superintending the packing of some baskets of gambier, with an attendant in the act of placing a bottle of Hodgson's pale ale and some glasses on the head of a cask, for the entertainment of two Dutch gentlemen, who were with him at the time. Ban Ok, a plump, good-humoured looking man, advanced towards us, and after giving each a hearty shake of the hand, called for chairs and another bottle of ale. When we had taken this refresh-



ment, he thought it time to proceed to business, and, as the captain had some baskets of tobacco to dispose of, a bargain was soon concluded, and a boat despatched on board for the goods. He appeared much mortified at our not being able to stay to dine with him, but when he found that he could not prevail on us to remain, a substantial tiffin was ordered in for our entertainment.

Ban Ok is, as he deserves to be, a rich man: he is the principal merchant at Rhio, a great proportion of the produce of the island passing through his hands. After a stay of about two hours we took leave, Ban Ok requesting us to make his house our home should we again visit Rhio.\* The tide being favourable we weighed anchor as soon as we got on board, and continued our voyage.

What is called the island of Bintang, actually consists of a group of several islands, having navigable channels between them. Many years ago, when the Ladrone pirates from China proved the terror of these seas, a large fleet of them, commanded by a renegade Spaniard, came suddenly upon the town through one of these straits, and

\* I did visit Rhio again; and spent more than one happy day with this treasure of a Chinaman.



massacred many of the inhabitants, seizing the remainder, whom they reduced to slavery. The town is better protected now, a strong fort being built upon the top of an adjacent hill, which would effectually prevent the recurrence of a similar event.

The interior of the island has been brought into a good state of cultivation by a large body of industrious Chinese, (it is said that their numbers amount to forty thousand, but no census has been taken,) who possess extensive plantations of pepper and gambier.\* A portion only of these productions comes through the town of Rhio, the greater part being sent to Singapore from the northern part of the island.

Rhio has been made a free port, with a view to encourage the natives of the Archipelago to visit it for the disposal of their produce, but the object has proved an entire failure, since the native vessels from the eastward all pass it and proceed to Singapore, which is only forty miles distant. Exemption from port duties will not alone induce the natives to visit Rhio, enterprising merchants, in whom they can put confidence, being also

\* Gambier is chewed by the natives with the betel-nut, and is used in England for dying and tanning. For a fuller description, see the chapters on Singapore.



required. The European population consists entirely of individuals in the employ of the government, not a single European merchant being established there. The little trade enjoyed by the settlement is chiefly with Java, several native vessels arriving annually from that island, which bring rice for the supply of the inhabitants, gambier being taken in exchange.

The establishment at Rhio must be very expensive to the Dutch government, the amount of duties levied on articles of home consumption by means of farms, proving extremely small.

In the evening we were close under a long low island, called Pulo Tercoli. A patch of coral rocks was marked down in the charts as being near its shores, and by a miscalculation of distance, we ran between it and the island. The soundings decreasing suddenly, the vessel, instead of being put about, was unfortunately put before the wind, and she ran upon the reef and stuck fast. After lying there about an hour, the tide rose and carried her off, and it did not appear that she had received any serious damage.

The next day we found ourselves in the narrowest part of the strait, in which the current ran so strong against us, that we were obliged to lie



at anchor for several hours. An immense raft of *poon* trees, which the owners were taking to Singapore, issued from one of the narrow channels between the islands, and anchored close beside us. The Malay wood-cutters, about a dozen in number, had erected huts for their accommodation on the raft, so that it assumed the appearance of a floating island.

At eight P.M. on the 6th, we anchored for the night a short distance from Singapore, having been forty days on the passage from Batavia.\* During the night a large Chinese junk brought up close by us, and about an hour before day-light the crew began hoisting their enormous main-sail. There must have been at least five hundred people on board, and the noise they made in getting under weigh, could have been heard miles off. The purchase by which they hoisted the main-sail was so slow, that nearly an hour elapsed before they got the yard to the mast head.

When day broke, the town and shipping were enveloped in mist, but the morning gun from the battery pointed out their situation. The rising

\* Our passage was much longer than it ought to have been, for I have since performed it with the monsoon favourable in four days ; and with the monsoon contrary in eleven days.



sun soon cleared away the vapour, and afforded us a view of the “Queen of the Further East.” Although so early, there was considerable bustle in the Roads ; several ships were standing out under all sail, to proceed on their voyages, and on board the others the crews were aloft loosing the sails to dry. The number of ships, junks, and prahus was so great, that I could scarcely bring myself to believe that, fifteen years before, Singapore had only been a fishing village, occupied by a few half-clad Malays.

The ship was soon at anchor in the Roads, and after breakfast I got into one of the numerous Malay sampans which surrounded it, and in the course of five minutes had entered the creek, and landed on the commercial wharf. If the Roads had a bustling appearance, that of the town was even more so. The wharfs were absolutely crowded with natives from all parts of India ; vast numbers of Chinese labourers were dragging bales and boxes out of the merchants’ warehouses and putting them into boats, where they were received by *kling* boatmen from the Coromandel coast. At the landing-place the Malay sampan boys (who resign the laborious employment in the cargo-boats to the *klings*) were plying for



hire; and on stepping on shore I was received by an obsequious Madras dubash, who offered to conduct "master" to any part of the town to which he might wish to go,

My first visit was paid to Dr. Almeida, a Portuguese merchant from Oporto, to whom I had a letter of introduction, and the reception I met with from him tended to increase the favourable impression I had received of the town and its inhabitants. I had come to Singapore for the purpose of engaging a passage to England by the first opportunity, but the indisposition which had caused this determination having passed away soon after my departure from Batavia, I recovered my spirits, and determined, if possible, to see a little more of the Archipelago before my final departure, and I never had cause to regret my determination.



## CHAPTER V.

### VOYAGE TO SIAM—BANKOK.

Embark for Siam.—Object of the Voyage.—Passengers.—A Malay Hadjee.—Seamen.—Arrive at Tringanu.—Transactions there.—Proceed to Calantan.—Continue the Voyage.—Cape Patani.—Arrive at Siam.—A Night Excursion up the River to Bankok.—Appearances of the Town.—Factory.—Hattee's Canoe.—Visit to the Royal Tombs.—Cavalier Treatment of Visitors.—Appearance, Manners, and Dress of the Siamese.—Talapoins or Priests.—Siamese Women.—Chinese and other Foreign Settlers.—Aggressions of the Siamese on the Malays.—An Ex-Raja.—Siamese Christians.—Adepts at Pig-stealing.—Anecdote.—Floating Houses.—Commerce of Bankok.—Leave Bankok for the Mouth of the River.—Scene in a Coco-nut Grove.—Arrival on board the Schooner.

After a month's stay at Singapore,\* I embarked on board the *Reliance*, Captain Burgess, a schooner of a hundred and forty tons, which had been fitted out for a voyage to the east coast of the Malay peninsula and Siam, and on the 10th of March, 1835, we left the Roads and entered the China

\* In arranging my papers for publication, I have deemed it advisable to defer my notice of Singapore to the concluding chapters.



Sea by Pedro Branca, leaving the straits of Rhio on our right hand.

There had been a revolution lately in Tringanu, one of the principal Malay states on the eastern coast of the peninsula, the Rajah having been deposed in favour of his brother. The deposed prince in his distress solicited the assistance of the Sultan of Lingin, who sent a considerable number of war prahus to his aid, and these having stationed themselves at Pulo Capas, an island nine miles from Tringanu, under the pretext of affording their assistance to the deposed Rajah, attacked indiscriminately all descriptions of vessels which they thought they could master, being, in fact, pirates in every sense of the word. The danger in which the navigation was thus involved, destroyed in a great measure the native commerce of the coast, and it was to supply a presumed deficiency of those articles hitherto conveyed by native craft, that the present voyage had been undertaken. The schooner was well armed, having four twelve-pounder carronades, and four long brass guns, besides muskets and small arms ; and she carried a crew of twenty Javanese.

We had several passengers on board, a greater number than generally falls to the lot of a small



vessel making a voyage of this description. Mr. Hunter, a gentleman who had resided during several years in Siam, accompanied us as the supercargo, having two Chinese agents to assist him. There were also an American missionary and his wife, who had been waiting some time at Singapore for an opportunity of proceeding to Siam, where they intended to remain, together with a Malay Arab, a connection of the Rajah of Tringanu, and several Malays, his attendants.

The Hadjee, for he had made the "pilgrimage," was much respected by the natives on account of his supposed sanctity. Every day, at sunrise and sunset, this pretended devotee placed himself in some particularly conspicuous situation, generally on the top of the long-boat, and with his face towards Mecca, performed his matins and vespers, which were accompanied by numerous prostrations and genuflections. One or two of his attendants occasionally joined him in his prayers, but they performed their parts rather awkwardly, and I fancied that they appeared half ashamed of the exhibition, for I frequently detected a look cast from the corner of the eye towards the quarter-deck, apparently to discover whether the Christian Padre was observing them. This Hadjee was no



favourite of mine. He wore the downcast hypocritical air which all the natives who have visited the "Prophet's Tomb," think it necessary to assume ; while all his actions were marked by a constrained appearance, which suggested the belief that every motion was intended for effect.

We had also several seamen on board who had arrived from Siam in a little vessel belonging to Mr. Hunter, which had lately been sold at Singapore. To judge from the sample of the people on board, the crew of this vessel must have consisted of very heterogeneous materials ; one man being a mongrel Portuguese who had acted in the capacity of gunner ; the others, a dark complexioned Chinese from Hainan, an old Bengal lascar, two stout shock-headed young Siamese, and Hattee, a fat good-humoured little Siam-Chinese, the personal attendant of Mr. Hunter. The Hainan Chinese proved the best helmsman in the schooner ; a circumstance which rather surprised me, for I had always understood that the natives of the "celestial empire" were of little use on board a square-rigged ship.

The monsoon was against us when we entered the China sea, but the schooner sailed remarkably well, and the weather being fine, the time passed



very pleasantly. Mr. Hunter proved a most agreeable companion : he had spent many years in different parts of the Archipelago, and therefore possessed much valuable information concerning it. The American gentleman and his lady had enjoyed a fine passage to India, in a large American ship, and therefore the kicks and plunges of the little vessel as she tore through the water were far from being agreeable to them, but they bore it all without complaint.

On the 19th we passed Pulo Capas, said to be the head-quarters of the Lingin pirates, but saw no appearance of them ; and on the 20th, we anchored about a mile and a half from the mouth of Tringanu river. Mr. Hunter soon afterwards went on shore, to endeavour to dispose of the rice, which, together with thirty chests of opium, composed our cargo.

The town was hidden from our view by the trees, and only a few huts were to be seen on the sandy point near the river. On this point two very extraordinary looking forts, or batteries, had been constructed—indeed, I do not know what name military men would give them. They were each composed of four strong posts, about forty feet high, fixed firmly in the ground, having a thick



wooden platform on the top, covered with thatch like a house. On each of these, a long twelve or eighteen-pounder carriage gun, and a pile of shot were placed. These forts would be useful in defending the mouth of the river in the event of an attack from the sea ; but a land force would soon dislodge the garrison, for the guns would be of no use unless they were tumbled down on the heads of the besiegers.

In the afternoon an immense fleet of prahus, about an hundred in number, came in from sea, causing us no little uneasiness, until we ascertained that they were Tringanu fishing boats. They appeared to have been exceedingly successful, for two or three of the smaller boats came alongside nearly full of large fish, which were disposed of at a very reasonable rate.

In the evening Mr. Hunter made his appearance on board ; he had not succeeded in effecting an arrangement for the disposal of the rice, as the Sultan would not come to his terms. He, however, determined to wait until the next day, but his hopes of making a good bargain were totally destroyed by the arrival, during the night, of the *Donna Carmelita*, a Calcutta country ship, entirely loaded with rice, the property of a Chinese



merchant of Singapore, who was on board. This ship had made a voyage to a considerable distance up the coast, and was now returning to Singapore, so that her cargo would now be disposed of at any price. Captain Reynolds informed us, that the Siamese had attacked Patani, a Malay town of importance, about seventy miles up the coast, and had totally destroyed it, carrying away every man, woman, and child who were not fortunate enough to make their escape into the jungle.

On the evening of the 21st we weighed anchor, and continued our voyage to the northward. During the passage from Singapore to Tringanu the wind had been from the north-east, but now the breeze was well to the southward, and without any violent change of weather, we found ourselves within the influence of the south-west monsoon.

In the middle of the night we passed close to the Redang islands, and at two p.m. on the 22d the schooner was anchored off the mouth of the Calantan river, when the Chinese *jerratulis* was sent on shore to learn the state of the markets. In the evening he returned on board, the Rajah having declared that he had no money, all his gold-dust and dollars having been given to the Siamese, who had lately laid him under contribu-



tion; indeed it was this timely douceur alone that saved his territories from the fate of those of his 'countryman, the Rajah of Patani. The constant recurrence of political disturbances, and the want of union in the Malay states, render them an easy prey to any nation which possesses a more substantial government.

Calantan is inferior in importance to Tringanu, but gold-dust, pepper, rattans, and hides, are exported in considerable quantities.

A Chinese *sampan-pukat*, (a long open boat) manned with about thirty-five men, arrived from Singapore while our boat was leaving the river. The *nakoda*, or commander, reported that the pukat had beaten off three pirate prahus which had attacked her some days previously, to the southward of Tringanu.\* The pukat had two men badly wounded in the fray. We now shaped our course for Cape Patani, which we expected to see the next morning. During the night we had a strong breeze in our favour, but at day-light, instead of being near the cape, no land was to be seen. We therefore steered to the westward,

\* We heard on our return to Singapore, that this pukat was afterwards taken by the pirates, and many of the crew murdered.



right in for the land, and in about two hours had a view of the hills over the late town of Patani. Our miscalculation proceeded from the inaccuracy of the chart, which was at least twenty miles wrong in the position assigned to the cape; we therefore determined to hug the land as much as possible, to avoid overshooting Sangora.

On the 26th we arrived at the latter town, but here also were unable to do any business; and we therefore went to sea the same afternoon, and steered for Siam. We soon lost sight of the land, and as no danger was to be apprehended from the pirates in the Gulf of Siam, the guns were unshotted, and the muskets cleaned and put away.

We passed the high islands off Cape Liant on the 30th, and steered towards the mouth of the Meinan river, on which Bangkok, the capital of the Siamese empire, is situated. A large ship was descried at anchor some distance ahead, and as the main land was not visible, she appeared to be anchored in the middle of the sea. She proved to be the American sloop of war *Peacock*, and we brought up a short distance astern of her, in three and a half fathoms' water, about eight miles from the land, which could now be indistinctly perceived. Soon afterwards a boat, with a midship-



man from the *Peacock*, came on board, and we learned that a diplomatic agent from the United States was now at Bangkok, endeavouring to make a commercial treaty with the King of Siam.

The opium, which was the only part of our cargo suited to the market, was contraband, its importation being strictly prohibited by the authorities; great caution was therefore necessary in endeavouring to dispose of it.

Mr. Hunter and Capt. Burgess proceeded to Bangkok, which is about forty miles distant, the following morning, but I was unable to pay it a visit until the 6th, when I left the vessel in the long-boat in the early part of the afternoon. The mouth by which we entered the river (for there are several), extended to about five miles in breadth, while the navigable channel was not more than half a mile wide, the water in the other parts being extremely shallow. We saw a large junk grounded on a sand-shoal near the entrance, which appeared to be bumping very hard; two other junks were working out against the sea-breeze, and with the exception of these, not a boat nor vessel was to be seen, the low swampy shores being also totally without houses or other symptoms of human habitation.



We sailed lazily along before the sea-breeze, the waters of the river having the appearance and consistency of liquid mud, in consequence of the bottom being stirred up by the strength of the ebb-tide. At six o'clock we reached Paknam, a large town about three miles from the mouth of the river. We passed between it and a large fort erected on an artificial island in the middle of the river, which is here a mile and a half wide, though the navigable channel is contracted to a third of this width, by a dam reaching from the fort to the opposite bank.

At nightfall we lost the breeze, and were therefore obliged to have recourse to the oars; the tide was against us and we consequently anticipated a tedious passage, Bangkok being still thirty miles distant. We were overtaken by several boats from Paknam, and we discovered that they were ascending the river to procure fresh water, an essential article in which Paknam is totally deficient. They had to pull against the ebb-tide for at least twelve miles before they could find water sufficiently fresh for their purpose.

Perceiving that the men were much fatigued, I determined to await the turn of the tide, and the boat being attached to one of the oars thrust into



the mud, I endeavoured to procure a little rest : sleep, however, was quite out of the question. The low jungle proved to be full of crickets and frogs, and the united chorus of reptile and insect soon became perfectly deafening, while the occasional splash of a heavy body falling into the water reminded us that a good look-out would be necessary to prevent a domiciliary visit from an alligator. I contented myself, therefore, with watching the myriads of little sparkling fire-flies glittering among the trees, some of which occasionally came into the boat.

Soon after midnight the tide turned, and we again advanced. Our water barica had been carelessly placed in such a position that the whole of its contents had escaped, and the river water being perfectly salt, we approached a small trading boat which was lying at anchor, for the purpose of procuring some of a more palatable description. The seamen being Javanese, had no better acquaintance than myself with the Siamese language, so that we could not make the people in the boat understand what we wanted. After some time I recollected Mr. Hunter having observed that Paknam signified the “mouth of the waters,” and with the assistance of this hint my



auditors speedily comprehended our wants, and made preparations to supply them by kindling a bamboo torch. Two youths who sat near the part of the Siamese boat to which I was holding, appeared rather alarmed on seeing, by the light of the torch, that they were so near an European, and they gradually retreated, casting furtive glances over their shoulders, until they concealed themselves under the thatched covering of the boat. The men however, did not seem to care much about me, and, though maintaining the strictest taciturnity, gave us the water, on which I presented them with a red cotton handkerchief, which was received without a word of acknowledgment, and having concluded our silent bargain, we pushed off and continued our journey.

About an hour before daybreak we arrived at the lower part of Bangkok, and notwithstanding the earliness of the hour, vast numbers of Chinese blacksmiths were busily employed forging iron-work, probably for the junks which were building on the banks. We passed on for about two miles, when perceiving an European-built vessel among the junks, I went on board to enquire our way to the factory. The brig proved to be a native vessel from Madras, under English colours, and com-



manded by a Frenchman, who informed me that the factory was a mile farther up the river, and furnished me with a guide to my place of destination.

We now threaded our way among junks, boats, and floating houses, jumbled together in glorious confusion, and totally concealing the banks from our view. Hundreds of small canoes, some not larger than clothes-baskets, were passing to and fro, many of them containing talapoins or priests, paddling lazily from house to house, collecting presents of provisions. The occupants of the floating houses were taking down the shutters which formed the fronts, exposing their wares for sale; printed calicoes, paper-umbrellas, sweet-meats, fruits, pots, pans, &c., being placed in situations the best calculated to attract the notice of the passers-by. This occupation was carried on entirely by the women, the men being either seated on the platforms smoking their segars, or making preparations to take a cruise in their canoes.

On arriving opposite the factory, we at last got a sight of terra-firma, the river in front of it being very clear of floating houses. Upon landing I met Hattee, Mr. Hunter's servant, coming down from the house, with something under his arm which looked like a child's coffin; on his approach, how-



ever, I discovered that it was a light canoe, about five feet long, and a foot and a half broad, in which he was about to take an excursion on the river. He wished to return with me, but as I felt great curiosity to see how he could possibly get into such a skimming-dish, I begged that he would proceed upon his mission, whatever it might be. Having launched the canoe in the water, he steadied himself by holding fast to a post conveniently driven into the bank, and placing one foot gently into the centre of his diminutive vessel he gradually drew in the other. I certainly expected to see the boat slip from under him; but he seated himself comfortably, and giving me a knowing look, flourished his double bladed paddle, and struck off into the middle of the river, the sides of the canoe not being more than two inches out of the water.

After an hour's repose in Mr. Hunter's chamber, I joined the breakfast party in the banquetting room, which consisted of Mr. Roberts, the American envoy, Mr. Hunter, Mr. Morrison,\* and about twenty of the officers of the *Peacock*. The table was abundantly provided with every

\* This gentleman, son of Dr. Morrison of Canton, was Chinese interpreter to the American embassy.



requisite by the Siamese government, an officer of the Pra Klan, or chief secretary of state for foreign affairs, being stationed at the factory, in order to see that all the wants of the Americans were supplied.

The factory is a large white-washed brick building, two stories in height, and forming three sides of a square, the fourth being closed by a high brick wall. The ground floor is appropriated to warehouses, kitchens, and servants' rooms, the upper portion only being occupied by the Europeans who visit Bangkok. The lower part of the building and the court-yard were in a very dirty state, the Malay prisoners from Patani having been confined there on their arrival from the Peninsula.

The ceremony of burning the body of the late King, whose decease had taken place about six months before, was to be performed on the day of my arrival, and some of the American officers and Mr. Hunter attended. Being much fatigued, and hearing that the principal ceremony would be postponed until the evening, I decided on remaining at the factory to enjoy a longer repose, and learning subsequently that the gentlemen who composed the party were dreadfully incommoded



by the crowd, and the heat of the weather, I did not regret having stayed away.

A pedestrian excursion into the town being totally impracticable, on account of the depth of the mud in the streets, I amused myself in the afternoon with a cruise upon the river, taking the precaution of procuring shelter from the intense rays of the sun by means of a large Chinese umbrella. At four o'clock we sat down to an excellent dinner. We were indebted for a part of the luxuries which it displayed to the indefatigable Hattee, who, to his other qualifications, added that of being a first-rate cook. He had concocted some well-flavoured curries, and I suspect that his morning voyage in the cockle-shell had been undertaken to procure the necessary ingredients.

In the evening several large canoes arrived, sent by the Pra Klan to convey us to the royal part of the town, which contains the tombs, a display of fire-works and other exhibitions being about to take place. We ascended the river for rather more than a mile, and put in towards the chief landing-place ; however, a number of the royal attendants, who were stationed at the spot, informed us that no one could land until after the arrival of one of the princes,



who was momentarily expected. Mr. Roberts, the American envoy, appeared much annoyed at the insult, and was inclined to return ; but Mr. Hunter, who ranked high as a Siamese nobleman, and had not been accustomed to such conduct from the natives, dashed in with his boat, and ordered the attendants to fall back, which they readily did.

We now advanced along a broad strait walk, bounded on each side by lines of tombs and pagodas, from which arose a strong effluvia of decomposing animal substances ; and after passing several avenues of the same description, running at right angles, the increasing crowd gave notice of our approach to the spot at which the exhibitions were to take place. Several large temporary wooden buildings had been erected upon posts, each tenanted by parties of men, who were employed in striking the floor simultaneously with the ends of poles, uttering at the same time loud shouts, a ceremony, of course, which we did not understand.

Mr. Roberts having received an intimation from the Pra Klan to attend with his friends, naturally expected that proper places would be provided for the party ; but when we approached the upper end of the avenue, no emissary of the Pra Klan



made his appearance, while the conduct of the crowd being very insulting, Mr. Roberts determined to retire. We accordingly commenced our retreat to the boat, accompanied by the contemptuous sneers of the mob.

Mr. Morrison seemed inclined to think that we owed our unhandsome reception to the party having been accompanied by several native Christian interpreters, who are justly despised by the Siamese on account of their dissolute habits ; but in all probability it was an intentional insult on the part of the Pra Klan. We found the boats at the landing place, and returned to the factory venting our indignation on the way, by the utterance of cutting strictures on the cavalier treatment which the Siamese had thought fit to bestow upon their visitors.

My notices of Siam and the Siamese must necessarily be very brief, since I cannot be supposed to have gained much personal acquaintance with them during the short visit which I made to the coast ; and as in my present work I have confined myself to the Indian Archipelago, Siam must be considered to be out of my cruising ground.

I entertain a hope that my friend Mr. Hunter will give the result of the observations made



during a residence of several years amid this unamiable people, to the public, since the intimate acquaintance which he has obtained respecting their manners and mode of government, would furnish materials for a very valuable work, affording more copious details than any hitherto published on the subject.

The Siamese are physically superior to the natives of the Indian Archipelago, if we except those of Bali; indeed the Balinese and Siamese bear a striking resemblance to each other.

The natives of Siam often attain a height above the middle size, and are generally well made. The hue of their skin is a shade darker than that of the Chinese, but they have fairer complexions than the Malays and Javanese. The dress of both males and females consists of a piece of cloth wrapped round the waist, one end being brought between the legs and fastened behind, which gives this portion of their attire the appearance of a pair of inexpressibles. In addition to the above-mentioned drapery, the women wear a piece of cloth wrapped round the body, under the arms; but the men content themselves with the nether garment before described, not even those belonging to the higher classes cum-



bering the upper part of the body with a single particle of clothing, except upon state occasions.

Both men and women have the hair shaved from their heads, with the exception of a small round patch which is left between the crown and the forehead. This being brushed up, is made to stand on end, which gives them a scared appearance. The fashion, however, is new, having only been adopted lately. It is said, perhaps maliciously, that the hair has been cut off behind in consequence of its having been found extremely inconvenient during their wars, since in several late battles, in which they have been routed by the more bold and active Cochin Chinese, many of the Siamese soldiers were seized in their flight by the tail, and thus made prisoners: a particularly disagreeable circumstance in the system of warfare carried on in this part of the world.

The men are generally morose and unamiable, but the women are often lively and cheerful, many of them being very good-looking, although the extraordinary fashion of dressing the hair does not improve their personal appearance.

The Siamese empire is apparently on the decline, a circumstance which may be attributed to the ruinous wars in which it is continually



engaged, and to the enormous church establishment. Every man is obliged to serve as a soldier when called for, and to bring with him provisions for his own subsistence sufficient for his supply for several months. Wars, therefore, entail little expense on the government, which may account for the readiness with which they are undertaken.

The men who are engaged in their usually inglorious campaigns, acquire habits of idleness which are never afterwards corrected, and consequently the support of these drones, and of the enormous mass of priesthood, falls entirely on the women.

The body of Talapoins or priests is enormously disproportioned to the rest of the inhabitants. In Bangkok alone their numbers exceed thirty thousand. Like lilies of the valley "they toil not, neither do they spin," but are idle consumers of the produce of the soil. They do not even cook their own provisions, not being permitted to do so by their creed, but the younger members of the community go from house to house to collect the viands which are bountifully supplied by the people.

The Talapoins received a great accession to their ranks during a late period of scarcity, indeed it must be a matter of surprise that all the males do not become members of the priesthood, since



among the privileges of their order may be reckoned exemption from labour, taxation, and military service, while they are at liberty to retire from the office whenever they please; the mode of life, however, led by these lazy vagabonds is found to be so agreeable, that they rarely take advantage of the latter privilege.

The males affect to consider the women in the light of an inferior order of beings, but these lordly personages seldom enter upon any undertaking of moment without first consulting their wives. The women, indeed, may be said to compose by far the most important portion of the community. They transact the greater part of the mercantile business, and are the principal cultivators of the soil, cheerfully undertaking the most laborious employments in the support of their families. The Chinese, of whom there are about half a million in Siam, engross all the mechanical employments. A considerable proportion of these people have taken up their abode in Bangkok, where they are engaged in building junks, and making *quallies* or iron pans, which are exported in large quantities to all parts of eastern India. Timber is dear in China; therefore the junks which are employed in foreign trade are generally



built in countries where wood is more abundant. It is supposed that a junk can be built cheaper at Bangkok than at any place in India, which may account for the large numbers of Chinese employed there in ship-building. Were they united, they might attain great political power, but the natives of different provinces are strongly opposed to each other, as much so, indeed, as if they belonged to rival nations.

There are also considerable bodies of Burmese, Cambodians, and Cochin Chinese, settled at Bangkok, all of whom are in every respect superior to the Siamese. To these may be added no small number of Malays, but they are slaves, and are generally scattered over the interior, at the plantations of the nobles to whom they belong.

During many years the Siamese have been making annual excursions into the Malay Peninsula, apparently for no other purpose than to procure slaves. They lately took Queda, a town nearly opposite to Penang, the aggression being connived at, indeed materially assisted by the English, in consideration of some commercial advantages to be granted by the king of Siam.

Two junks, bringing the remainder of the inhabitants of Patani, arrived in the river during my



stay. The decks of the junks could not contain these miserable captives, and platforms were erected on the outsides of the vessels for the purpose of affording greater space. These unfortunate creatures were tied hand and foot during the voyage, in order to prevent them from throwing themselves overboard, which many would have done had they been at liberty. About six months previous, while Mr. Hunter was at Bangkok, several junk loads of the Patani people were confined in the court and lower apartments of the factory, and their sufferings must have been dreadful. Many of the men were wounded, but no consideration was shewn them on that account, not even a bit of cloth being given to them to bind up their wounds. During the few days of their detention in the factory, numbers of them, particularly of the young children, died from want of food, and from the horrible state of disease which prevailed in consequence of the miseries which they had endured on the voyage. Those who survived were assigned away as slaves to the nobles, and were selected for removal with the utmost disregard to natural ties; husbands and wives, mothers and children, being separated without the least scruple or remorse.



At Bangkok I saw the ex-Raja of one of the Malay states several times, and had some conversations with him, but they were always restricted to common-places, owing to his being constantly attended by one or two Siamese. I was well aware that the present miserable condition of the Malay states must be attributed to the utter and open profligacy of the nobles, whose vices, and the dissensions which they created amongst all classes, had caused the ruin in which they were now involved, rendering them an easy prey to the Siamese ; but I could not help sincerely commiserating the captive prince in his misfortunes. He was often to be seen hanging about the factory, which he frequented, probably from a vague hope that the Europeans might do something for himself and his people. He asked for nothing, and made no complaint, but his melancholy appearance plainly showed that he deeply felt his degraded situation. I am certain that the East India Company's servants would not have sanctioned the aggressions of the Siamese on the natives of the Malay peninsula, had they known that it would have entailed the most abject slavery upon the wretched people who fell into the hands of the Siamese ; but their want of fore-



sight has been the cause of an immense sum of human misery.

Many native Christians are to be found at Bangkok, probably about five or six hundred. These people are either descendants of the Portuguese who formerly traded on the coast, or converts to the Jesuits of the Propaganda mission, several of whom are established in Siam. The Christians inhabit a portion of the town near the factory, called Santa Cruz, the greater part of which was burned to the ground a short time before my arrival. They are despised both by the Europeans and the natives, and certainly not without cause: for they do no credit to any country which might own them. How the majority of these people contrive to live, it is impossible to say, but appearances are strongly against the supposition that they earn a subsistence by honest occupations.

Their communication with Europeans has enabled them to acquire a more extensive degree of knowledge than the natives, and some of them are consequently employed as interpreters and pilots, the captain of the port also belonging to this class. Their acquirements, however, are not always turned to a worthy use, and among other



accomplishments of a very dubious nature, they are said to be complete adepts in pig-stealing, so much so, that a grunter can be whipped up and carried off without the least noise, and even without the animal itself being perfectly aware of the circumstance. Many a wretched Chinaman, who has been watching for weeks the gradual development of the sides and haunches of a fattening porker, awakes some morning, perhaps after dreaming of the feast he expects to enjoy in the course of a few days, and finds to his utter dismay that the pig has been abstracted from the sty during the night.

I was told of a circumstance which occurred to a Danish gentleman, who resided in the factory a few years previous to my visit. He had a sow, with a large family of very fine pigs, and as they were feeding one morning on the wharf in front of the factory, he was surprised to see one of the pigs rush into the water, apparently against its will: for it gave utterance to the most piercing squeaks as it plunged into the liquid element. The owner immediately went down to the water side, but could see nothing of the runaway. A native Christian, who happened to be fishing from a canoe about twenty yards distant, was asked



whether he could afford any explanation of the mystery ; but he had seen nothing, and could only say that he had heard a splash in the water a short time before. The owner of the pig was very much surprised, but remembering that pigs have been possessed with the devil, he supposed that it must have been the case in the present instance : indeed this circumstance would account for the reluctant manner in which the animal departed. A few mornings afterwards the same thing occurred again, and running down to the water side, the bereaved pig-owner saw the same man fishing in the same spot, but could discover no signs of his pig. However, on the third occasion the pig stopped suddenly in its flight to the river, and hurried, squeaking, back towards the house, with part of a fishing-line dangling from its mouth ; on further examination, a strong hook was found attached to the end of the line, stuck fast in the jaw of the pig, part of a sweet potatoe, which had been used as bait, still clinging to the snare. The gentleman, for some time afterwards, kept a good look out for his friend in the boat, but he never made his appearance again.

The factory and the King's residence were the



only brick dwelling-houses that I saw at Bangkok. The latter is an extensive building in the European style, on the left bank of the river. All the rest, even those of the Pra Klan and other noblemen, are constructed of wood.

It is very inconvenient to walk in the town, not only on account of the mud, but from the number of dogs, these brutes appearing to consider Europeans fair game. During two or three very short excursions in this swampy town, I was attended by two of the boat's-crew, armed with paddles, and we were therefore enabled to keep these troublesome animals at bay.

The best shops are built on wooden floats on the river; indeed when the waters are out, they flood the whole town, the only communication between the different dwellings being by means of boats. At this period of the year, when the river becomes swelled by the rains, whole streets of floating houses, together with their inhabitants, sometimes break adrift from their moorings, and are carried down the river, to the utter confusion of the shipping. These floating streets, nevertheless, possess their advantages. A troublesome neighbour may be ejected, house, family, pots and pans, and all, and sent floating away to find



another site for his habitation. A tradesman, too, if he finds an opposition shop taking away his custom, can remove to another spot with very little difficulty.

A knowledge of the art of swimming is highly necessary to those who inhabit floating houses, and it forms one of the earliest branches of the education of the children. Even infants that are hardly able to walk, may be sometimes seen paddling about in the river, almost as if it were their natural element. On such occasions the mother is, of course, near at hand to prevent an accident.

Several British merchants were formerly established at Bangkok, but during several years, Mr. Hunter has been the only European in the place. It is rarely visited at the present period by ships from Great Britain, for the duties are so heavy on square-rigged vessels, that the produce of the country is principally brought to Singapore in Chinese and Siamese junks, which pay no duty at all. Two or three ships under British colours, belonging to natives of Hindoostan, arrive annually with Indian piece-goods. The brig we found at Bangkok belonged to natives of the Coromandel coast ; and many of the Kling seamen had goods of their own, which they hawked about the



towns farther in the interior, exchanging them for sugar, ivory, gamboge, &c., and their vessels consequently remain several months in the river.

The Portuguese have a resident at Bangkok, but considerable periods sometimes elapse without the town being visited by a single ship of that nation.

On the 11th, after a stay of only four days at Bangkok, I prepared for my return to the schooner, Mr. Hunter intending to remain a short time longer in the hope of disposing of the opium. The drug happened this year to be very cheap in China, and many of the junks from Canton had brought two or three chests each, which had completely spoiled his market.

The American gentlemen were also making preparations for their departure, the treaty having been concluded; several of the officers being about to return on board in the *Peacock's* long-boat, the envoy and the remainder of the party intending to follow soon after. Having received an invitation from Mr. Brown, the second master of the *Peacock*, to take my passage in his boat, I gladly accepted it, for that belonging to the schooner was so small, that I had been much cramped when ascending the river in her.

We left Bangkok at nine o'clock in the morning,



and commenced beating down the river, for the wind was directly against us. As I came up during the night, I had no opportunity of viewing the scenery, but I found that little more was to be seen in daylight than in darkness. The banks were universally low jungle, a few native huts being seen at great intervals near the river's side. The villages, which were erected on higher ground some distance from the river, were entirely concealed from view by the trees, and we should not have known that any existed, but for a circumstance which occurred on the passage.

About noon, we approached a grove of tall cocoa-nut trees, and the fruit presented so tempting an appearance, that the seamen begged the officer in charge of the boat to allow them to procure some. As the trees appeared to be public property, no habitation being in sight, he readily consented, and the boat was pushed in for the shore. After several unsuccessful attempts of the party to ascend one of the trees, a long-legged Yankee succeeded in climbing up to the nuts, and while opening his knife to cut them away, he informed us that there was a village on the other side of the jungle. He had no sooner commenced operations by tumbling down the cocoa-nuts, than the inha-



bitants, who I dare say wondered what species of monkey was stealing their property, set up a loud shout to scare him away ; but Jonathan was not to be done out of his cocoa-nuts, after having had so much trouble in reaching them, and he did not descend until the tree was quite cleared. We wished to pay the natives for them, but they kept up such a continued screaming and shouting, that we could not make ourselves heard, and if we had, I doubt whether they would have ventured near us.

We arrived at Paknam at nine in the evening, where I got into my own boat, which had accompanied us down the river. The *Peacock's* boat continued her voyage to the ship, but as my craft was small, I did not choose to venture out to sea on a dark night ; the boat was therefore moored near the bank of the river, and I wrapped myself up in my boat-cloak, and slept as well as the musquitoes would allow me.

Mr. Hunter was detained at Bangkok, day after day, in the hope of disposing of the opium, and did not join us until the 26th, when he came on board in one of the king's war-boats, accompanied by Padado, the mongrel Portuguese captain of the port.



This war-boat was about forty tons burthen, and was constructed on the same principle as a Malay prahu, but she was rigged like a Chinese boat. She carried two long brass guns in the bow, and the crew, about forty in number, were armed with spears, and wore an uniform of blue calico, the dress being similar in its cut to that of the London firemen. The fleet of Siam is composed entirely of vessels of the above description.



## CHAPTER VI.

### VOYAGE DOWN THE EAST COAST OF THE MALAY PENINSULA.—TRINGANU.

Departure from Siam.—Arrive at Tringanu.—Malay Habitations.—Occupations of the Natives.—The Sultan and the Pangerans.—Manners and Customs of the Malays.—The Pirates.—Precautions against their Attacks.—Visit from a Spy.—Specimen of the Malay Aristocracy.—Departure of a Musquito Fleet to Attack the Pirates.—Departure for Singapore.—Malay Fishermen.—Hooks and Lines.—Fish.—Severe Squall.—Cochin Chinese Vessels and Seamen.—Arrival at Singapore.

On the 27th May we weighed, and went to sea on our return to Singapore, purposing to put into Sangora and Tringanu on the passage.

On the 29th we were off the islands near Cape Liant, the inhabitants of which, many of whom are Chinese, chiefly employ themselves in catching and curing a species of flat-fish, which they export to all parts of India, being considered superior to any that is procurable in this part of the world.



In a large bay to the eastward of Cape Liant stands a town called Chantibon, and near it there are extensive forests of teak, it being one of the few places in Eastern India in which that valuable timber is found. No private individual is permitted to use this wood, the quantity being considered only sufficient for the supply of the king's dock-yards.

On the 3d May we put into the Siamese port of Sangora, on the Malay peninsula, but being unable to transact any business, we continued our voyage the next day. A few days before our arrival, some Malay pirates had entered the outer harbour and cut out a Siamese junk, the crew of which succeeded in escaping on shore. All the junks were now taken into the river, to prevent the recurrence of a like event.

On the 9th May we anchored at Tringanu, and on the following morning the schooner was run into the river and moored close to the town; the rice having been disposed of to the Sultan the previous afternoon, but at a price much lower than that offered on our previous visit. A *jerratulis* or secretary in the employ of the Sultan, and several other Malays, came on board to superintend the measuring of the rice.



The inhabitants of Tringanu are genuine Malays, and a description of the town and its inhabitants would, with a few topographical alterations, answer equally well for all the independent Malay states on the Peninsula.

The town consists of a large groupe of huts, composed of wood and thatch, heaped together without any order or regularity. The part inhabited by the few Chinese who were not driven away by the tyranny of the former Sultan, can boast of some appearance of regularity, the houses and shops forming a small street, but the Malay habitations are all detached from each other. The dwellings of the Sultan, and of two or three of the principal pangerans or nobles, are built of more substantial materials than the rest, indeed the former may be called a fort, for it is surrounded with a *paggar*, or bamboo fence, and is defended by several long brass *lelahs*.

Catching and curing fish forms the principal employment of the inhabitants. The dried fish are disposed of to the natives of the interior, in exchange for inland produce, gold-dust, and pepper; and these are again exchanged by the people of Tringanu, for rice, tobacco, cotton-goods, &c. the produce of foreign countries.



Although rice forms the principal article of food, it is not cultivated, the Malays being little disposed to agricultural occupation, and preferring the more precarious subsistence to be gained by a maritime life.

The government must be pronounced aristocratical, for although the Sultan is nominally the chief authority, the whole power is vested in the pangerans, or lords. The late Sultan was deposed in consequence of some offence given to this powerful body, the present sovereign being elected by them in his room. The Sultan and the pangerans form a sort of commercial company, and monopolize the whole of the foreign trade, the people not being permitted to purchase a single *ganton* of rice that has not passed through their hands.

To the profligacy of the nobles, and to the intolerant bigotry introduced by the Arabs under the garb of religion, the present depraved character of the Malays may be attributed. The Sultan and the Pangerans are always surrounded by a number of idle dependants, who pass their time in gambling and cock-fighting, deeming an honest occupation disgraceful.

There are considerable numbers of Arabs and their descendants established in Tringanu, who have ob-



tained great influence in the state, having succeeded in the partial introduction of the Mahomedan code of laws ; and their law of succession, which gives the chief power to the strongest, not to those who have the most right, has occasioned the constant commotions which take place in this, and every other Malay state. Many of the pangerans, however, are in favour of the Undang Undang, and Addat Malayu, the old Malay codes, which differ much from those introduced by the Arabs, so that between the two there is no law at all, and every man must be the redresser of his own grievances.

In their communications with each other, the Malays are always polite, abusive language never being employed amongst them. Every man carries a *kris* at his side, ready to avenge an insult should it be offered to him ; and the certainty of instant recourse to this weapon, no doubt tends in a great measure to prevent the occurrence of any event that might call for its use.

In trading with the Malays, an European should always endeavour to keep his temper, which an individual not accustomed to them, will sometimes find a matter of difficulty. In making a purchase, they will frequently offer five dollars



for an article worth twenty, and should the vender put himself into a passion, they will tease him with like offers, in the hope that he will give them the goods at the cheapest rate for the sake of getting away.

Their commercial transactions being generally conducted in places in which a number of individuals are collected together, as for instance, in the court of the Sultan, or at the residence of the Capitan China, if secrecy should be required, they adopt a mode of bargaining by means of the fingers, which precludes the bystanders from discovering what is going on. The parties grasp each other's hands, and the purchaser makes an offer by pressing one of the joints of the vender's fingers, there being to each joint a number attached, from one to ten; and touching a certain part of the hand, will shew whether the offer is in tens, hundreds, or thousands. The hands of the dealers are covered with a handkerchief, so that none of the people present can see what is going forward. When the purchaser has made his offer, the vender, by another grip, lets him know what price he will take; and thus they continue, one increasing his offer, and the other lowering his demand, until the bargain is con-



cluded, or broken off. This custom has, I think, been introduced by the Arabs, for they were always the greatest adepts at it, while the Javanese and other natives who have little communication with them, are unacquainted with the method.\*

The Malays are much addicted to chewing betel, and every man of consequence has an attendant who carries his betel box, and prepares the nut for use, in the following manner: an areka-nut being split into several pieces, one of the fragments is placed in a *siry* leaf,† to which is added a little lime, and a small piece of gambier. As their mouths are always filled with this mixture, their speech is rendered very indistinct; indeed the dandies always affect to speak as if the mouth were full, even when not chewing betel, as it is considered fashionable.

Tringanu river can only be entered by vessels of small draft, as the depth of water on the bar does not exceed twelve feet at spring tides. At the mouth it is about forty yards wide, but it opens out considerably immediately within the entrance. Above the town, which is situated

\* It is also practised at the fairs in some parts of Hindoostan, by Arab horse-dealers.

† *Piper betel*, a sort of capsicum.



on the right bank, about a quarter of a mile from the sea, the river can only be navigated by small boats ; the interior mountains are so near, that an extensive river cannot be expected to exist on this part of the coast.

The soil in the vicinity of the town is sandy, which may account for the superior salubrity of Tringanu over many parts of the western coast of the Peninsula. The sandy soil creates a dryness in the atmosphere, and vegetation not being very luxuriant, no malaria can be created by its decomposition. The soil, though sandy, is not, however, by any means barren, but the Malays are too idle to test its capabilities, trusting to the people of the interior for the supply of vegetables. The banks of the river are shaded by extensive groves of cocoa-nut trees, the finest and most productive that I had seen in the Archipelago.

Domestic animals are rarely met with in the town, but buffaloes and goats can be procured from the neighbouring country. The only species of domestic poultry I saw was the common fowl, the game breed appearing to prevail.

On the night of the 12th of May, a Tringanu trading prahu came flying into the river with the pirates close at her heels, but they did not venture



to pursue their intended prey over the bar. The little vessel had run the gauntlet through the whole fleet, and was quite riddled by the shot which had been fired at her. One man was killed and two or three were wounded on board.

This circumstance confirmed the report which stated, that the Lingin allies of the Ex-sultan were still in the neighbourhood; and we were further informed, that they had determined to make an attempt upon the schooner as soon as she left the river, the thirty chests of opium we had on board, which were worth rather more than three thousand pounds, being much coveted by them. We certainly expected an attack, and were not quite sure that an attempt would not be made to cut us out of the river. Every precaution was therefore taken to prevent surprise; half the crew always remained on the look-out during the night, and the guns and muskets were kept loaded, with matches ready lighted for use.

The Ex-sultan possessed many friends in the town, and it was well known that a portion of the produce of his piratical adventures was disposed of in the bazaar. Report also stated, that the crew of a Chinese *sampan-puckat*, which had lately been taken by them, had been sold in the



town for slaves, their tails having been cut off to make them appear to be Malays. Had this been the case, they must have been kept out of our sight, for we did not meet with any of them.

On the 16th we completed the discharge of the cargo, employing fishing-boats to bring off sand for ballast. In the afternoon a Cochin Chinese vessel came into the river from Anam, laden with salt and rice. She was about fifty tons burthen, built after an European model, and with the exception of the Batavian fishing-boats, appeared to be better adapted for fast sailing than any native vessel I had hitherto seen.

We received a visit the same day from a Malay, dressed as a Hadjee, who came on board to enquire the price of a passage to Singapore; but as his appearance did not by any means resemble that which usually characterizes these holy pilgrims, who are always easily distinguished by their peculiar manners, we were rather suspicious of him, and took care to watch his proceedings upon his departure. After allowing his boat to drift about for a short time, until he probably thought that no further notice would be taken of him, he struck out to sea, and steered away to the southward, towards Pulo Cupas, whence he had



doubtless been sent to reconnoitre, and report upon the state of the schooner.

An expedition against the pirates had been set on foot by the Tringanese, a short time after our arrival, and a little Malay, a nephew of the Sultan, who was our constant visitor, talked in the most confident manner of driving them off the coast. This man would afford a fair, though rather a favourable sample of the Malay aristocracy. He was about twenty-two years of age, but appeared older, from his having already acquired the habit of smoking opium. In height he did not reach more than five feet, and wore a *kris* in his girdle nearly as long as himself, which caused his *sarong* to stick out behind, giving him the appearance of a bantam cock; while the manner in which he strutted about the deck, with a little skull-cap stuck on one side of his head, completed his resemblance to that important-looking little bird. His mouth was always filled with betel, but this circumstance proved no bar to his loquacity, the remarks with which he favoured us very liberally, having the wealth, power, and importance of his uncle, the Sultan, for their subject. He appeared to be perfectly tame and harmless, and in all probability, had he been re-



moved early in life from the contaminating influence of his associates, would have become a useful member of society.

On the 17th, after five days' preparation, the armament against the pirates was ready for sea, and we were informed that it would be put in motion when the land-breeze set in at night. It consisted of a tope of forty or fifty tons burthen, together with several large fishing-boats. We had watched the proceedings of this squadron with considerable curiosity, and the result of our observations made us acquainted with a very remarkable fact, namely, that the naval stores consisted of a large proportion of the rice which we had brought to the port, the tope being laden with this article, in addition to a considerable quantity of plantains, coco-nuts, and other refreshments; indeed, as we had suspected, it appeared evident that the fleet had been fitted out for the purpose of trading with the pirates, the Tringanese chiefs being too deeply interested in their welfare to drive them away.\*

We left Tringanu for Singapore on the 18th of May, and in the evening, passed close to Pulo

\* The pirates still infested the coast on my return to Europe in the end of 1834.



Capas ; no pirates, however, made their appearance. The wind was light when we passed the island, but it soon increased to a strong breeze from the land, and we stretched away to the southward under all sail.

We had two Arab passengers on board, who were accompanied by several Malay attendants, and one of the latter, being a most expert fisherman, kept the table constantly supplied during the passage. He was most successful in the capture of a fish bearing a strong resemblance to a pike, and generally from three to four feet long, well flavoured, but so full of bones, that it was necessary to take great precaution in eating it. These fish could only be caught when the vessel was going fast through the water, and in consequence we experienced much difficulty in hauling them in, while the lines were frequently broken.

The fishing-lines used by the natives of the Archipelago are made of cotton, twisted up extremely hard, and afterwards dipped in bullocks' blood, which enables them to resist the water. European hooks are rarely employed, as they prefer the clumsy implements made of brass or iron wire, which every fisherman or seaman can manufacture for himself.



When a vessel has dropped its anchor or is becalmed, numbers of lines are put over the side by the seamen, who are generally successful in taking fish. As the Java sea, and the southern part of the China sea, seldom exceed forty fathoms in depth, the hooks will always reach the bottom, unless a very strong current should prevent them. The fish caught near the bottom are a species of red perch, sometimes exceeding six or seven pounds weight, perfectly resembling those caught at Simon's Bay, in South Africa; and the Ikan Dori, a small dark-coloured fish, of about a pound weight. Great caution is necessary in handling the latter, they being armed with poisonous spikes under the pectoral and dorsal fins, the wounds from which are extremely painful. The former kind are well flavoured, but the latter are not much esteemed.

The Malay fishermen are certainly of opinion that fish are gifted with the faculty of hearing, for each canoe is provided with a rattle made of a gourd filled with pebble stones, which is struck at intervals against the side of the boat for the purpose of attracting the fish. If fish really possessed the disputed sense, this noise, which can be heard on a calm day at the distance of several miles,



must arrest their attention, were they even at the bottom of the sea; but one would suppose that it would have the effect of frightening them away, rather than of alluring them to the spot. The Malays evidently entertain a contrary opinion, since a fisherman would as soon think of going to sea without his hooks as without his rattle.

On the 24th we passed the mountainous group of islands near the south extremity of the Malay Peninsula. The inhabitants, who are few in number, are very barbarous, and the crew of a shipwrecked vessel would receive no mercy at their hands.

During the night, the schooner was caught in a severe squall, and before sail could be reduced, she lay over on her broadside, with the muzzles of the lee guns in the water. It is on occasions such as this, that the inferiority of native seamen, when compared with Europeans, becomes most apparent. The crew were quite bewildered, and when ordered to clew up the top-gallant sail, instead of hauling on the clew-lines, the serang and three parts of the crew seized on the weather royal sheet, and as this small rope was not strong enough to resist their united force, it broke, and those who were not fortunate enough to seize the



ropes about the foremast, fell into the lee scuppers, and as that was quite under water, it is surprising that some were not lost overboard. To increase the confusion, the two Arabs had scrambled on deck from below, and holding fast by the boat, were shouting to Allah to assist them, as if the more noise they made the greater probability there would be of their being heard. The strength of the squall was soon expended, otherwise we must have lost our masts.

The weather continued very indifferent during the remainder of the passage. On the 27th, when near the entrance of Singapore Straits, we fell in with six Cochin Chinese prahus, similar to that which we had seen at Tringanu. Although exposed to a severe squall, these brave fellows were carrying all sail on their little vessels, and seemed determined to start nothing. Our Chinese jerratulis watched them for some time in silent admiration, and at last he cried out—“*Ah ! dia brani berlayer itu orang Cochin China*”—“they are bold seamen those Cochin Chinese ;” and indeed they may be so pronounced when compared with the Chinese themselves. I do not know how the Cochin Chinese would behave on board square-rigged ships, but they work their little vessels in a man-



ner that would not disgrace the best European seamen. These prahus, none of which exceeded fifty tons burden, had beat down the China sea against the monsoon, a feat which a Company's ship would scarcely have attempted twenty years ago.

The Cochin Chinese are deservedly great favourites with those who are well acquainted with them, and from their liveliness and vivacity, they have often been compared with the French. In their commercial intercourse with Singapore, they have to struggle against many disadvantages. In the first place the selfish government of their country not permitting a foreign trade, they are consequently, when engaged in this forbidden pursuit, obliged to steal away and risk all their little property, and probably their lives also ; and being unable to procure arms, become the favourite prey of the cowardly Malay pirates, many of them, perhaps to the annual amount of one hundred and fifty, being killed or taken, within a day's sail of our settlement at Singapore.

On the 2d of June we anchored in Singapore Roads, and having received an invitation from my friend Dr. Almeida, to reside with him during my stay, I removed to his villa as soon as the vessel was secured in the river.



## CHAPTER VII.

### VOYAGE TO BORNEO.

Preparations for the Voyage.—Sail from Singapore.—Opium Smokers.—Arrival on the Coast of Borneo.—Search for a Town.—A Fortified Creek.—Anchor off Sinkawan.—Dutch Cruise-prahus. — Visit to the Town. — Reception from the Chinese.—The Town and its Inhabitants.—The Kung Se.—A Popular Assembly.—Return to the Schooner.—Mud Banks and their Occupants.—Novel Mode of taking Fish.—Continue our Voyage to the Sambas River.—Excursion up the River to the Town.—Visit to the Dutch Resident.—Bring the Schooner up the River.—Interview with some wild Dyaks.—Description of Sambas.—Visit to the Sultan.—The Pangerans.—Former system of Piracy.—Excursion up the River in search of the Orang Outan.—Trees.—Baboons.—The Orang Outan.—The Wou Wou.—Domestic Animals.—A Public Dinner.—Departure from Sambas.

IN the month of February 1834, a report having been brought to Singapore that the people of a Chinese colony on the west coast of Borneo were anxious to establish a permanent commercial intercourse with the settlement, some mercantile men at Singapore, chiefly Chinese, decided on fitting out an expedition to that part, and the con-



duct of it having been offered to, and accepted by me, I took the command of the British schooner *Stamford*, and received on board a cargo consisting of opium, tea, and other articles, to exchange for the produce of the gold mines of Borneo.

On the 28th of February, the schooner being ready for sea, I took leave of my friends and embarked, and at three o'clock on the morning of the 1st of March we weighed with the first of the land breeze, and having cleared the shipping, shaped our course for the eastern entrance of Singapore Straits.

At noon we were becalmed near Pedra Bianca, a small white limestone rock in the middle of the entrance of the straits. In the afternoon a strong breeze set in from the northward, and passing within a cable's length of Pedra Bianca, we entered the China Sea, where the swell brought down by the north-east monsoon, which now prevailed, soon caused some of our landsmen to sigh for the smoother water of the Straits.

The schooner was small, being rather under eighty tons burthen, but she was better adapted for the purpose than a vessel of larger size, the coasts of the part of Borneo to which we were bound, being very little known. I had been unable



to procure an European officer at Singapore, and was obliged to put up with a Malacca Portuguese which I regretted the more as I was aware that during our stay on the coast, it would sometimes be necessary for me to leave the vessel for several days together. In addition to a crew of thirty-five Javanese, I had eight Chinese, two of whom were men of business and interpreters, while the others were engaged to superintend the weighing of the cargo, and to examine the gold which we expected to receive.

From the information that I was enabled to collect, I learned that the Dutch had two small settlements on the west coast of Borneo, on the banks of the two principal rivers, one at Pontiana, in latitude  $0^{\circ} 2'$  south, and the other at Sambas in latitude  $1^{\circ} 13'$  north, being about ninety miles apart. The Chinese colony to which we were bound, occupied the country between these two settlements, and I could not learn at Singapore in what relation the Dutch and the Chinese stood towards each other. An English ship had visited this part of the coast in 1827, but I could meet with no one who possessed information concerning her proceedings, which I regretted the more as Sinkawan, which I understood to be the chief seaport



town of the Chinese, was not laid down in the charts.

On the evening of the 3d of March, the island of St. Julian was seen at some distance to windward, and on the 4th we passed close to the southernmost of the St. Esprit Group. The islands which are scattered over this part of the China Sea are high, and well covered with wood. They are generally supposed to be uninhabited (with the exception of the Tumbelan Group) and we saw nothing to induce us to entertain contrary opinion, but as they are often visited by piratical prahus on their voyage from Borneo to the straits, it is likely that there are people established on some of them, to take charge of the plunder and prisoners occasionally deposited there.\*

Two of our Chinese were old and habitual opium smokers, and, as they were aware that I would not allow them to inhale this pernicious drug on board the schooner, I was rather interested in watching the effect which my interdiction would have upon them. During two successive days they looked the very picture of woe, and I was several times

\* On our return from Borneo, we descried a large three-masted prahu of about sixty tons, apparently a Lanun pirate prahu, at anchor close to Green Island.



on the point of recalling my inhibition ; but on the third they appeared to be comparatively reconciled, and I flattered myself that I had succeeded in breaking them of a habit so injurious both in a mental and physical point of view. I was undeceived, however, by one of their countrymen, who informed me that they had now taken to chewing the drug, which they had probably never thought of before. These men were both natives of China, not one of the five Malacca-born Chinese that we had on board, being in the habit of smoking opium.

At daylight on the 7th, we saw the Lamukatan islands, and in the evening we ran through them, and anchored during the night in a bay on the main land, in which I expected to find the town of Sinkawan.

In the morning, when the sun had cleared away the vapours, I took a long look round the shores of the bay, but neither habitation, canoe, nor anything that could lead to the supposition that a human being existed in the vicinity, was visible. The harbour was completely land-locked, and the high land rose around us like an amphitheatre, so that it required but little stretch of fancy to suppose ourselves in an inland lake ; and the perfect



smoothness of the water, which was not even agitated by a ripple, added not a little to the resemblance.

One of the Chinese, and the Javanese carpenter, had previously visited Sinkawan, but as I expected, they could give me no accurate information respecting its locality. The mouth of a creek opened itself immediately opposite the vessel, and as I had no doubt that inhabitants would be found on its banks, the long-boat was put over the side, manned and armed, and I entered it with the two interpreters, and steered in towards the place which seemed to promise some intelligence concerning the object of our voyage.

The mouth of the creek, more distant than we expected, being nearly two miles from the vessel, proved to be very narrow, the branches of the trees on each bank meeting over the centre, and in a great measure excluding the light. We alarmed two alligators about five feet in length, which were lying on the bank, and one rushed into the water close to the boat, although there was scarcely sufficient space for him to pass between it and the bank. The men struck at it with their sharp pointed paddles (which were now used for pulling the boat instead of the long oars) as he



passed under us, and probably wounded him severely.

About a hundred yards from the mouth of the creek, a barricade of strong stakes extending across it, stopped our further progress. There was an opening in the centre, about four feet wide, large enough to allow the passage of canoes, but we were detained nearly half an hour in widening it sufficiently to admit the boat. Some distance further up the creek, we found the remains of another, with a dismantled mud-fort immediately within it, from which we concluded, that the inhabitants of the banks, whoever they might be, were now either too powerful to need such defences, or too weak to keep them in repair. As we advanced, numbers of brown monkeys, many as large as foxes, came down the branches of the trees close to the boat, uttering the most discordant shrieks, any attempt on our part to drive them away, rendering them the more noisy and troublesome.

After ascending the creek for about two miles, we found ourselves close to a hut, in which two Chinese were boiling sea-water, for the purpose of making salt. They seemed rather alarmed at our sudden appearance, but on being addressed



by one of the interpreters, they informed us that the creek was called Songy Ryah, and that Sinkawan, the town of which we were in search, was situated on the banks of a similar creek, fifteen miles further up the coast.

We now put about and returned, the monkeys still following and annoying us to so great a degree, that I could not refrain from firing a shot at one of the ringleaders, which brought him to the ground, much to the apparent surprise of his companions, who ceased their outcries, many of them descending to examine their defunct comrade. A few still followed us, but they kept high upon the trees, taking extraordinary leaps from branch to branch.

We soon arrived on board the schooner, when the anchor was weighed, and we beat up along shore to the northward. During our absence, some of the seamen had been employed in fishing, and a considerable quantity of Ikan Dori proved the fruit of their labours. These fish, which I have described in a former chapter, abound on the coast, a creek in the neighbourhood being called Songy Dori, from the immense number of these fish to be found there. At noon we entered a narrow strait between Tanjong Batublatt, and the



innermost island of the Lamukatan group. A series of spiral stones, from ten to twenty feet high, were ranged along the shore at the foot of the hill, and from the regularity of their appearance, it was difficult to suppose that they had received their form from the washing of the waves. After passing the point, the shore became low and covered with jungle, but the side of a small hill, a short distance inland, appeared in a state of high cultivation.

A little before dusk, we perceived a small opening, which was supposed to be the Sinkawan creek, and at eight o'clock we anchored about four miles from it, the shallowness of the water not permitting a nearer approach.

With the first appearance of dawn the following morning, I left the vessel in the long-boat, and we pulled in towards the creek, but were unable to perceive it owing to the dense fog which hung over the shore. On nearing the land, the water became very shallow, and we laid on our oars until the fog should clear away sufficiently to allow us to see the mouth of the creek. After remaining a few minutes, we heard the voices of a number of people about a hundred yards' distance from us, and a favourite Malay stanza, which one



of them chanted, led us to suppose that they were Malays, which proved to be the case, for the mist arising from the water disclosed to our view two large war prahus, which were lying in the mouth of the creek. On perceiving us, the crews of the vessels began to beat their gongs, and as we set them down for pirates, an uncomfortable feeling pervaded the whole party, which subsided, however, on perceiving a Dutch flag and a distinguishing pennant hoisted in each, shewing them to be Dutch cruisers. They had no European on board, but the commodore, a Lingin Malay, informed me that he was under the orders of the Dutch resident of Sambas, and he endeavoured at the same time to dissuade me from visiting the town, representing the Chinese as very ferocious, and entertaining a great dislike to strangers. Finding that I was determined to proceed, he offered to accompany us, and took his seat in the boat, his own canoe, well manned, following.

The creek was about fifteen yards wide, the banks being covered with impenetrable jungle, and, as at Songy Ryah, the trees were well stocked with monkeys. After ascending the creek about three miles, we arrived at the town, and I en-



tered the court-house, in which the Kung Se, or headmen, resided. The house was only occupied at the time by a man and two women, and the former went into the town to inform the Kung Se of our arrival.

Three of the latter, followed by a considerable number of the inhabitants, soon arrived from the town, and I was requested to seat myself in a large arm-chair, which, with an image of the Joss or deity, were placed in the upper end of the room, the Kung Se and my two interpreters occupying stools in front of me. Being seated, I informed them of the purport of my visit, and requested to know whether they were inclined to open a commercial intercourse.

The court-house was now filled with half-naked Chinese, each of whom considered himself authorized to join in the discussion which ensued, and endeavoured to make himself heard above his neighbour. The noise at last became perfectly deafening, and I was glad to escape it, under the plea of wishing to inspect the town. On issuing from the house, I saw the commander of the cruise prahus taking his departure with his people. He had not appeared perfectly comfortable during his stay at the court-house, and I fan-



cied several times that I saw angry glances cast at him by the Chinese. They were evidently extremely vexed at something, and from their conduct I was convinced that they entertained no bad feeling towards me, or my party.

I found the town to consist of a single street of low wooden houses, the front rooms of each being shops for the sale of grain, meat, groceries, &c., or rooms appropriated to opium smoking. The court-house, which was detached from the town, contained one large room for the transaction of public business, and several smaller apartments which were occupied by the Kung Se and their families. It was surrounded by a low turf wall, with a gate opposite the town, near which several long jingals, or swivel guns, carrying balls of about one pound weight, were placed, muzzle up, leaning against the wall.

The male population, with the exception of a single Malay thatcher, was exclusively Chinese. I found the town almost deserted by the men, who were all in the court-house, and the shops were in the mean time taken care of by the women, many of whom were Chinese, though the majority were Dyaks, the aboriginal inhabitants of the island. The Dyak women appeared



much confused at the sight of an European, and although few, if any of them, had seen one before, they could not overcome their diffidence sufficiently to take a second glance until after I had turned away. Several of them would probably have been considered pretty, even in Europe, and the state of confusion into which they were thrown added not a little to their interesting appearance. Their features generally bore some resemblance to the Malays, but many were even fairer than the Chinese ; while several were freckled by exposure to the sun, which I had never noticed before in any of the natives of the Archipelago. I met with only two Dyak men in the town, and I was informed that one of them could speak Malay, but I could not induce him to utter a single word. I had previously heard of the Dyaks only as a barbarous people, more strongly addicted to human sacrifice than any other race in the world, and I was, therefore, totally unprepared to find them so mild and prepossessing in their appearance.

On re-entering the court-house I was honoured with a salute of three guns, which the suddenness of my appearance had prevented them from giving me on my first arrival. There was still much talk



in the assembly, but it subsided on my entrance, and the secretary of the Kung Se, who appeared to be the chief, led me to the great chair, and took his seat before me. I could perceive that he was completely at a loss how to proceed, and I now discovered that the Dutch, who, from being all-powerful at sea, were enabled to blockade the coast, had interdicted all commercial intercourse between the Chinese territory and foreign countries, except through the medium of their settlements at Sambas and Pontiana. The Kung Se hesitated to open the port from the dread of a breach with the Dutch, and at the same time felt extremely reluctant to see me depart, as a direct trade with the British at Singapore had for a long time been anxiously desired. They wished me to wait until they could refer to the Chinese governor, who dwelt at Montradok, the capital, a town about thirty-five miles in the interior; but as this would have entailed a delay of at least four days, I determined to visit Sambas, and endeavour to make some arrangement with the Dutch resident. I was accompanied to the boat by the whole party, who expressed a hope that I should soon return.

On our arrival at the mouth of the creek, we



found that the water on the bar had not sufficient depth to permit the boat to pass out to sea; we therefore made her fast to one of the cruise prahus, to await the rising of the tide. One of the small boats was missing, and I suspected that it had been despatched to Sambas, to inform the Resident of our arrival on the coast.

Large tracts of mud had been left uncovered by the receding tide, and flocks of gulls and other birds were feeding on the worms and small fish. Vast numbers of little amphibious creatures were running about in the mud, and they appeared to be sought after by some of the larger birds. They were from two to eight inches long, resembling a fish in shape, of a light brown colour, and could run and jump by means of two strong pectoral fins. On the approach of an enemy they buried themselves in the mud with inconceivable rapidity, so that their sudden disappearance seemed to be the work of magic. One of the Malays was employed in catching them, as they are considered to be a great delicacy. He used for the purpose a thin plank, four feet long, and one foot broad, on one end of which were fixed several sharp-pointed nails, the points projecting beyond the end of the plank. He placed the plank flat upon the mud,



and with the right knee resting on it, and kicking the mud with the left foot, he shot along the surface with great rapidity, the sharp-pointed nails transfixing the little creatures before they could succeed in burying themselves sufficiently deep to avoid it. This is a dangerous sport, and requires great skill in the fisherman to prevent accidents, for should he lose his plank, death would be almost inevitable, the mud not having sufficient consistence to support him without the aid of this simple contrivance.

We reached the schooner a little before noon, when the anchor was weighed, and we made sail for Sambas River, the mouth of which is about twenty miles to the northward of Sinkawan.

At seven in the evening we passed Slaku Creek, on which is a town that formerly enjoyed a considerable trade; nearly all the inhabitants, however, were murdered, about two years before, in a night attack by a large party of Dyaks, who came down the coast from the northward in search of human heads. At midnight we brought up in five fathoms water, about six miles from the land, the entrance of the Sambas River bearing E.N.E.

On the afternoon of the 12th of March, I left the schooner in the gig, with four men and a



Chinese clerk, for the purpose of visiting Sambas to endeavour to make some arrangement with the Dutch resident. The body of water poured out by the river was immense, and I formed a high opinion of the capabilities of a country which possessed so noble a stream. After entering the river, a long straight reach stretched before us at least three miles wide, which appeared like a channel between two lands, its length being so great that the end of the reach could not be perceived. The banks were thickly covered with tall trees, and not a house, not a patch of cultivated ground, nor a single living animal, served to remind us that other beings existed besides ourselves. An almost perfect silence prevailed, which was only broken by the dull noise of the oars as they moved in the rullocks. At dusk in the evening I was aroused to the contemplation of our present situation, which was by no means an agreeable one. Night was setting in, and we had yet twenty miles to go before we should arrive at a human habitation, while our route would oblige us to turn off into a minor branch of the river, fourteen miles from the mouth; and having only the general directions given to us by the Malays at Sinkawan,



to guide our movements, the probabilities were much in favour of our going astray.

At ten o'clock at night we entered a tributary branch of the river about a hundred yards wide, which we concluded to be that on which the town of Sambas is situated. We had not proceeded more than a mile, before we heard the sound of an approaching boat, and from the noise made by the paddles, we were convinced that it contained a great number of people. As, in these large rivers, every man that is encountered is an enemy, we stopped pulling, and shot under the shade of the bank, the boat passing down the centre of the river without the people in her perceiving us. We met with no further adventure during the night, except the disturbance caused by some large animal, as we were passing close to the bank, which, from the peculiar noise it made, the men supposed to be an orang-outan. Whatever it was it must have possessed prodigious strength, for it shook a small tree on the banks with great violence, apparently with the utmost ease. We heard the snorting of this creature for some time after we had passed on, but he did not follow the boat.

Soon after daylight in the morning, we arrived



at Sambas, much to the delight of the whole party. The poor men did not appear to be greatly fatigued, although they had been pulling, with little intermission, for seventeen hours, during which time we must have passed over at least sixty miles of ground, although the actual distance between the schooner and the town, was not more than forty.

I found Mr. Rumswinkle, the Dutch resident, at his house, and he informed me that, according to the tenor of his instructions from the Batavian government, he could allow me to have no commercial intercourse with the Chinese territory from Sinkawan ; but he offered to assist me as much as possible should I bring my vessel to Sambas, the port having lately been made free to vessels of all flags. I therefore sent the Chinese jerratulis into the bazaar to enquire into the state of the markets, and, as his report was favourable, I decided on bringing the vessel up the river.

At six in the evening I left Sambas in a little yacht belonging to Mr. Rumswinkle, and arrived at the mouth of the river on the afternoon of the 12th.

On entering the river with the schooner the following day, I found that Mr. Rumswinkle had come down, and was now on board the yacht,



which got under weigh, and accompanied us up the river. We brought up for the night at the entrance of the Sambas branch, and in the morning I went on board the resident's vessel to breakfast.

While sitting on deck after our meal, my attention was attracted by a movement in the bushes on the bank of the river, within about fifty yards of the vessel, and on looking more closely, I saw several small canoes, with people in them, who were evidently endeavouring to conceal themselves. I pointed them out to the resident, who, concluding them to be Dyaks, who occasionally come down the river from the interior for the purpose of fishing, sent a boat to bring them on board. After some delay it returned with a male and a female Dyak, the others having escaped, and concealed themselves in the jungle on the approach of the boat. The poor creatures appeared greatly alarmed, and stood before us like culprits awaiting their doom ; and it was some time before we could persuade them that they had nothing to fear. They were many shades darker in complexion than the Dyaks I had seen at Sinkawan, which was probably owing to their having been more exposed to the weather. The man was of



the middle size, and slightly built, his countenance being extremely mild, and totally devoid of that sinister expression often to be met with in the Malays. The woman was stouter than her husband, and appeared morose and sulky, which I had no doubt was partly owing to her having been roughly treated by the Malays when taken into the boat. The dress of the man consisted merely of a piece of blue calico worn round the waist, but the female was much better clad, having a loose frock, and a pair of pantaloons of the same materials as the dress of her husband, her head being covered with a high conical cap, ornamented with several rows of little blue and white glass beads. They both appeared to dread the Malays extremely, and I am convinced that our presence alone prevented the latter from treating them with the greatest indignity.

Having each been presented with some Java tobacco, of which they are passionately fond, they were put on board the boat, to be conveyed to their canoes, and the boatmen, finding that they could not tease them in any other way, rolled the boat about, in the hope of shaking them from their seats.

The man spoke a few words of Malay, and



from what we could gather from him, it appeared that neither he nor his wife had ever seen Europeans before. Mr. Rumswinkle informed me that I was particularly fortunate in meeting with these people, as he had never before seen a small party of independent Dyaks so far down the river; indeed their canoes are only adapted for the smooth waters of the inland streams. They were about ten feet long, made from a single tree, and were so shallow that the water was washing into them as they lay near the bank, although the breeze was not very strong; had they launched out into the river, their canoes would assuredly have been swamped. To the unseaworthiness of their little vessels we were indebted for our acquaintance with them, for otherwise they would not have awaited our approach, but have darted away with all speed.

On the 15th of March we moored off the fort, and as the *Stamford* was the first English vessel that had visited Sambas since the establishment of the Dutch, or indeed had ever visited it in a peaceable capacity, I deemed it proper to salute with nine guns, which were returned by the fort with seven.

In the afternoon I dined with the resident, meeting at his table three gentlemen, (who, him-



self included, formed the whole of the European community of Sambas, with the exception of the private soldiers,) M. Engelen, the commandant, a Prussian; M. Benant, the surgeon; and Lieut. Fewler. To M. Benant, an intelligent Frenchman, I am indebted for much attention during my stay; he readily gave me all the information and assistance that I wished for, and I was rather surprised to find at Sambas, a place scarcely known, one of the best-informed men I had met with in India.

The life led by these gentlemen was very monotonous; for as they only heard once a year from Batavia, they were almost cut off from the rest of the world. Fortunately the greatest harmony prevailed among them, which is not always the case, even in so small a community, and nearly every evening we all assembled in the fort, or at the house of the resident.

The town of Sambas presents rather a mean appearance, since it does not possess a single habitation built of stone or other substantial material. The houses occupied by the government officers are low wooden buildings, covered with thatch, and destitute of an upper story; and the huts of the natives are chiefly raised on posts, near the



banks of the river, while many are erected on floats as at Siam, the latter being generally shops for the sale of articles of Malay consumption.

The Chinese campong, which runs parallel with the river, forms the only street in the town, there being no communication between the houses of the Malays, except by means of the river. Every habitation, therefore, possesses one or more canoes, which are fastened to the ladder by which the inmates descend.

The fort, or rather stockade, is composed of a fence of poles banked up on the inside, enclosing the barracks of the soldiers, about forty in number, a moiety being Europeans. A few nine-pounder guns are mounted on the embankment.

There is no carriage road in the whole country, nor a single horse or beast of burthen, the numerous rivers affording so much facility of communication with the inland parts, that the want of either is not greatly felt, while from the soft nature of the alluvial soil near the river, and the number of streams and water-courses which intersect the country, the formation of a road would be a work of great labour and expense.

Although the country in the vicinity of Sambas is low, swampy, and covered with impenetrable



jungle, the climate is considered healthy. There was no sickness among the Europeans during my stay, and the commandant, who had resided during several years in the country, appeared as if he had just arrived from Europe. The weather throughout the year is mild and pleasant, scarcely a day passing without a shower of rain.

The day after my arrival I paid a visit to the Sultan, whose house is situated on the banks of the river, about three-quarters of a mile above the residency. I found him seated on a mat spread upon the floor of his audience hall, a large wooden pavilion erected in front of his house. He arose on my entrance, and led me to a chair, seating himself in another on the opposite side of the mahogany table, and we had a long desultory conversation, during which he asked me many questions concerning Singapore and the English, and displayed more quickness than I had expected to find. I left him with rather a favourable impression, which was, perhaps, in a great measure owing to the high opinion he appeared to have formed of the British. He was a stout man, apparently about fifty, but so broken down with opium smoking that it was impossible to judge correctly of his age.



Several of the Pangerans or nobles were with him, who also appeared to be extremely debilitated from the same cause. I was informed that the Laximana or admiral, a miserable little wretch, who dozed on his seat during my visit, was in the constant habit of smoking five dollars' worth of opium per day.

The time of both prince and nobles is almost entirely spent in gambling, cock-fighting, and opium-smoking, the richer Chinese frequently joining in these debauches. A young Javan Chinese, who had arrived from Samarang on a trading expedition, lost, during my stay, the whole proceeds of his valuable cargo, and, I believe, mortgaged his vessel for the payment of the gambling debts which he had incurred.

Here, as at every Malay town that I had hitherto visited, the nobles were both mentally and physically inferior to the lower classes, a circumstance chiefly owing to the dissolute mode of life pursued by the former, while the latter, not having the means of indulging in a similar course, retain their bodily strength and intellectual faculties in a much higher degree. The depravity of the Malays cannot be the subject of surprise, while such examples continue to be afforded by those



to whom the people look up, and consequently endeavour to imitate.

Before the arrival of the Dutch, Sambas was a nest of pirates, who became the terror of all the peaceable natives of the Archipelago. In 1812, these marauders having attacked an English vessel, several British men-of-war were sent from Batavia to destroy the town. The inhabitants resisted, but were soon defeated, and the town was burnt, the fort razed to the ground, and the guns tumbled into the river. The Resident's house is built on the site of the old fort, and near the door lay one of the guns, an eighteen pounder, which was split two or three feet from the muzzle, in consequence of a shot from one of the gunboats having struck it in the mouth.

I had a long conversation with an old man, formerly one of the piratical Panglimas, who had been wounded severely in the action. He gave a most graphic description of the combat, and appeared to think that his countrymen had incurred no disgrace on account of their defeat, but rather deserved praise for having had the boldness to resist at all.

A few days after my arrival, I set out with M. Benant, M. Fewler, and a party of soldiers, on



an excursion up the river in quest of an orang-outan which had been seen by some Malays, and which M. Benant wished to procure, alive or dead, for the purpose of transmission to a museum in Europe. We left the town at daylight in the morning with two boats, and ascended the southern branch of the river, which joins the main stream at the upper end of the town.

Numbers of brown monkeys occupied the trees and bushes on the banks of the stream, who behaved much better than those I met with at Songy Ryah, for they crawled quietly about the branches in search of fruits and berries, and only favoured us with an occasional grimace as we passed near them.

We landed on the bank, after having ascended about eight miles, and found the jungle so thick, that we were obliged to send a man in advance with an axe to cut a path. About twenty yards inland the forest became comparatively free from underwood, and we were enabled to proceed with greater facility. We had not penetrated far, before a large animal of the baboon tribe, apparently an orang-outan, was pointed out to M. Fewler by one of the soldiers, but before he could bring his gun to bear, it escaped out of sight. We all started off



in pursuit, but were soon stopped by a swamp in which the foremost of the party sunk up to his waist, and was extricated with the loss of his shoes. Finding it impossible to cross, we turned about towards the boat, and I was not sorry that the inhabitant of the woods had eluded the attempt on his life. From the manner in which the ground was rooted up, it was evident that wild pigs had recently been banquetting in the neighbourhood; but, at this time, our search for them proved unsuccessful, and we only succeeded in bagging two birds, one of which was a large white hawk, and the other a black-bird, strongly resembling a magpie in its habits and appearance. These birds are much respected, or rather feared, by the Dyaks, and it would be advisable for those who visit the Dyak tribes to refrain from shooting them, the destruction of one of these birds, which are considered by the aborigines to be evil spirits, being deemed an offence that will entail calamity on the whole country.

Many of the trees were (with the exception of a few that I had met with on the south-west coast of Australia,) the largest that I had ever seen, and run up to an immense height without a single



branch. The timber is not generally considered to be well adapted to ship-building, but would answer admirably for masts and spars. Several camphor, dammer, and *tankamem* trees (the latter produces the wood-oil,) were pointed out to me. Teak has not yet been discovered in Borneo, but iron-wood abounds, although it is seldom used from the difficulty experienced in working it.

On approaching the boat, a Papua or New Guinea-negro, one of my boat's-crew, was perceived cutting wood for thole pins; and the Javanese soldiers, by way of alarming him, and amusing themselves, rushed towards the spot shouting "Orang-outan!" on which the poor man, who had no notion of being shot for a monkey, jumped behind a tree and roared out, that he was not an orang-outan but an orang Papua.

After partaking of an excellent breakfast, the boats'-heads were put towards Sambas, and we arrived at that place a little before noon. It had been previously arranged that we should dine with M. Benant, and we regretted that no game had been procured to add to the entertainment; but the commandant, who had remained at home, proved more successful than ourselves, for, while endeavouring to get a shot at some doves which



appeared within a hundred yards of the fort, a half grown pig had run across his path, which he succeeded in bringing down, although his gun was merely loaded with small shot.

The only wild animals that I saw or heard of in the country, were pigs, small bears or badgers, deer, apes, baboons, monkeys, and an animal which, from the description given, must have been the *tapir*.

Of the monkey tribe there is an immense variety, a very small proportion of the different species being known, even to the Europeans at Sambas. One variety of baboon, of which M. Benant was kind enough to give me a stuffed specimen, I have not seen described in any work on natural history that has come under my observation. It is about three feet high when standing erect, is covered with short, glossy, brown hair, and has no tail. The chief point in which it differs from all others I have seen, consists in the conformation of the face; for the nose, instead of being broad and flat, is long and aquiline, projecting about an inch and a half from the face. The countenance, however, does not bear so strong a resemblance to that of the European, as the face of the orang-outan to that of the negro.



These baboons are by no means numerous, and visit the neighbourhood of the settlement only periodically. When descending the river on my departure, I saw three of them at different places, each of which was sitting in the bushes near the river, watching the schooner as she passed. As I wished to procure another specimen, I shot at two of them, and brought them down, but the seamen I sent on shore to pick them up, returned without being able to take them, stating, that each baboon was dragged into the jungle by another of the same species. I suspected that the men were afraid to venture into the jungle, and therefore invented the tale; but from the known habits of the race, it is not altogether improbable.

Only one ourang-outan was to be seen in Sambas, although they are supposed to be more numerous in the neighbourhood than in any other part of Borneo. The dearth of specimens may be accounted for by the difficulty, indeed almost impossibility, of taking an old one alive. That which I met with was the property of M. Benant, and was about eight months old, being nearly as helpless as an infant of the same age. From a distance of a few yards, it was really difficult to distinguish him from a negro child, particularly



when his nurse had tied a napkin before him, and was feeding him with a spoon. His body was about the size of that of a child six months old, but his legs were small, sinewy, and crooked, and his skin dark, almost black, a few long yellow silken hairs being scattered over it, which could only be perceived on a near inspection. His disposition was by no means amiable, and his countenance always appeared morose and melancholy; nor did I ever perceive the slightest shade of anything like intelligence pass over it. Being yet unable to walk erect, he crawled about on all fours, and never appeared so happy as when rolling about on the floor, hugging a towel or a piece of cloth: when any attempt was made to take it away, he would utter the most piercing screams, but was never known to show any symptoms of an intent to bite.

M. Benant had also several varieties of apes and monkeys in his possession, the most interesting being a wou-wou, a small tailless long-armed ape, of a light brown colour. He was extremely gentle, having none of the mischievous tricks of the monkey, and was therefore permitted to be at large and enjoy the free range of the house. He seemed to be rather afraid of men, but with the



children became playful in the extreme, and he might often be seen running after them with his eyes shut, and his arms spread out, like a child playing at blind-man's-buff. He generally walked on his hind legs in a slouching manner, but when alarmed would run away upon all fours, displaying great agility.

Of the bears or badgers, (for I do not know which name would be the most correct,) I saw none running wild, but I inspected two which had recently been caught, and were about to be taken to Java by a Chinese, who had purchased them.

They were rather larger than bull-dogs, and bore a most perfect resemblance to Russian bears, being also covered like those animals with shaggy black hair. They were very savage, and a thick stick, which I put through the bars of the cage, was seized by one of them, and crushed with a single gripe. They are said to inhabit holes made in the ground, and to live principally upon roots.

Deer are only found in the more open parts of the country : I saw none either alive or dead, but, from some horns which were brought down the river by Dyaks, I should judge them to be of the same species as those found on all the larger islands of the Archipelago.



The only domestic animals in the settlement are pigs, dogs, and cats, with a few buffaloes. There are neither sheep nor horses, there being no pastures near the town for the support of the one, nor roads upon which the others might be rendered useful.

Pigs and dogs are only kept by the Chinese, the breed of the latter being the same as the fox-like animals which are met with near Canton, and were probably introduced by the emigrants from that place. Here, as in all Malay countries, I noticed a peculiarity in the cats, which I never heard satisfactorily accounted for. The joints near the tip of the tail are generally crooked, as if they had been broken. I was at first inclined to doubt that they were born thus, but was afterwards convinced that such was the case.

The monsoon was now on the change, and the weather rather tempestuous. Soon after my arrival, the Sultan, who was the farmer of the opium duties, had sent a messenger to the governor of Montradok, requesting that if he should be in want of the goods brought in the schooner, he would send some person to Sambas, for the purpose of making arrangements for the purchase; but the governor very wisely declined, since



by holding a greater degree of intercourse with the Dutch settlement than was absolutely necessary, he would give encouragement to the system which was reducing his country to a desert.

In the beginning of April, the Resident gave a dinner to the Sultan and the pangerans, which afforded me an opportunity of seeing all the nobility together. I took a seat in the verandah with M. Benant, before the arrival of the guests, and he was kind enough to point out to me all those pangerans with whom I had not yet made acquaintance.

Towards the dinner-hour they came dropping in, one by one, dressed in their gayest attire, each being accompanied by as many attendants as he could muster. Some time after the hour appointed the Sultan arrived, in a long highly ornamented canoe, having been saluted with eleven guns on passing the fort, and we took our seats at the dinner-table, which was placed in the great hall of the Resident's house. The Sultan was seated at the head of the board, supported by the Resident and Lieut. Fowler, the other end being occupied by the commandant, the surgeon, and myself; while the pangerans, about twenty in number, were ranged on both sides.



The table groaned under a load of good cheer ; veal, fowls, and fish, were dressed in all forms, in roasts, stews, curries, pillaws, kabobs, &c.; but in consideration for the native guests, pork was scrupulously banished. Wine was placed before the Europeans, but the natives only indulged in sherbet ; not that they have any dislike to the former, but as it is prohibited by their religion, they did not think proper to drink it on so public an occasion.

Many of the diminutive pangerans could scarcely see what was on the table, it being inconveniently high ; and they did not appear to be perfectly comfortable, each one endeavouring to find out what his neighbour was eating, before he ventured to help himself. I observed that one of them made his dinner from a single skewer of kabobs (small pieces of seasoned meat roasted on little bamboo sticks), without bread or vegetables. They were, of course, very unskilful in the use of a knife and fork, and on more than one occasion I saw the hand put to the mouth, and the piece of meat on the end of the fork borne aloft in the air ; they always recollected themselves immediately, and cast an anxious look around to discover whether their mistake had been noticed.



After dinner we removed to the verandah, in front of which a temporary building had been erected for a theatre, and here we were entertained with music and a Malay play. The music was Javanese, but the players were Malays from Singapore, the whole party having been brought from that place a short time previous by one of the pangerans, who had married the sister of the Tamung-gung of New Harbour.

The play was totally different from the *wyangs* of the Javanese; consisting of extemporaneous buffoonery carried on by several men, dressed most grotesquely, with their faces covered with masks, there being only one female performer. The dialogue afforded great amusement to the Malays, but I lost much of its point, from the dialect being somewhat different from that to which I had hitherto been accustomed. All the Europeans present received some notice from the chief buffoon, which was not, however, always of a complimentary nature.

Half the population of Sambas was present, and the amusements were kept up until a late hour.

Towards the middle of April I commenced preparations for my departure, the Chinese at Mon-



tradok still refusing to hold any intercourse with me while I remained at Sambas. In the regulations sent from Batavia for the guidance of the Resident, it was ordained that no commerce should be carried on with Sinkawan, or any Chinese port, excepting through the medium of vessels from Sambas or Pontianak ; and as nothing was mentioned respecting foreign vessels, (the regulations having been made before the port of Sambas was opened,) I considered that the schooner was entitled to the privilege, having already entered the port of Sambas. After much discussion, the Resident, who was apparently inclined to forward my views as far as he could, without incurring a breach of duty, agreed to permit me to return, and on the 15th of April we broke ground from Sambas, and commenced our descent of the river.

The Resident had left the town a few days before me with his whole naval force, to seize a sampan-puckat from Singapore, which had entered Songy Ryah, the river I had first visited on my arrival on the coast. I met him with his fleet at the mouth of the river, as he was returning after having captured the puckat. She was about twenty-five tons burthen, manned by thirty Chinese, and carried a cargo worth ten thousand dollars, upwards



of two thousand pound,—a good windfall for the treasury chest. This vessel was condemned and sold by auction before I left the coast. Who would be a Chinese ?



## CHAPTER VIII.

### BORNEO.—DUTCH COLONIES, RECENT DISCOVERIES.—THE ABORIGINES.

The West Coast of Borneo.—Malay and Chinese Colonies.—Cession to the Dutch.—Monopoly of the Diamond Mines.—Blockade of the Chinese Colony by the Dutch.—Consequent Destruction of its Commerce.—Revenue of the Dutch Settlements.—Commerce.—Productions.—Population.—Rivers.—Recent Discoveries in the Interior.—The Danau Malayu.—The Dyaks, the Aboriginal Inhabitants of Borneo.—Personal Appearance.—Women.—Habitations and Plantations.—Commerce.—Skill in Tempering Iron.—Weapons.—Religion.—Human Sacrifice.—Human Head Hunting.—Destruction of the Population of Slaku.—Dyaks said to be Cannibals.—Susceptible of Improvement.—Relicts of an Ancient People.—Oracular Jars.

THE island of Borneo bears the same relation to Eastern India, that the continent of America bears to Europe, being a country in which the various tribes inhabiting the further east may find a refuge from religious persecution, or escape the disadvantages of over-population in the mother country. Thus we find the coasts of the island to be



inhabited by several nations, totally unconnected with each other, governed by their own laws, and adopting their own peculiar manners and customs. The west coast is occupied by Malays and Chinese; the north-west coast by the half-caste descendants of the Moors of Western India; the north part by the Cochin Chinese; the north-east coast by the Sulus; and the east and south coasts by the Bugis tribes of Celebes. In addition to these, there are no fewer than three distinct tribes, living in prahus, and wandering about the shores of the island: the Lanuns from Magindano; and the Orang-Badju and Orang-Tidong, source unknown. Except on a few spots on the north-west coast, where the Dyaks are to be met with near the sea, the aboriginal tribes have all retired into the interior.

If an opinion may be formed of the capabilities of the unknown parts of Borneo from those of the western portion of the island, it would appear that no country in the world can compete with it; since the districts occupied by the Dutch and the Chinese, in addition to the possession of a soil which vies in richness with that of any other island in the Archipelago, contain inexhaustible mines of gold and diamonds, which are so easily



wrought, that the inhabitants are enabled to procure considerable quantities of both, with the most inefficient instruments.

The rich mineral productions of the island probably first attracted the cupidity of the Malays at the time in which colonies from Menangkabu, in Sumatra, were spreading themselves over the western part of the Archipelago. They must have been firmly established in the island at the earliest emigration of the Chinese, for the latter acknowledge that the country which they occupy, belongs by right to the Malay chiefs of Sambas and Pontiana. The Malays, being a maritime people, did not devote much of their time to working the mines; but having fixed themselves near the mouths of the great rivers, Pontiana, Sambas, and Succadan, were contented with the gold and diamonds procured by barter from the aborigines, the majority being employed in piratical cruises against the more industrious natives of the Archipelago. The Chinese, on the contrary, being much addicted to mining speculations, established themselves in those parts in which gold-dust and diamonds were most readily to be procured. They are now principally congregated in the district of Montradok, but considerable numbers are also to



be met with at Sambas, and all the towns and villages on the coast.

The west coast of Borneo was ceded to the Dutch by the King of Bantam, in Java, about the year 1780 ; that prince either having, or professing to have, a claim to it. An expedition was fitted out by the Dutch government to take possession of the territory, and Saccadan, then the most important town on the west coast, was fixed on for their establishment ; but the Sultan of Succadan disallowed the right of the King of Bantam to the territory, and refused to admit the Dutch, on which the town was attacked by the latter and utterly destroyed, so that scarcely a vestige of it now remains.

A Dutch factory was then established at Pontiana, and another at Mompava, a town in the district occupied by the Chinese ; but both the latter and the Malays were so strongly opposed to the commercial monopolies introduced by the new comers, that the establishments were abandoned after a trial of fourteen years, during which time the Dutch government sustained a great loss both in men and treasure.

In 1823 the Dutch again settled in Pontiana, and purchased the monopoly of the diamond mines



from the Sultan for 50,000 dollars. The stones below four carats were to be the property of the miners, but all above were to be sold to the Dutch government at twenty per cent. below the market price. The profits, however, were by no means so great as had been expected ; those of the first two years amounting only to fifteen per cent. on the money advanced to the Sultan ; and even this sum has been annually decreasing, either from the miners not working with zeal, or from their retaining the stones in their own possession.

The Dutch, finding their speculation to be a losing one, and being determined by some means or other to fill up the vacuum in the treasury chest, turned their attention towards their neighbours the Chinese, in the hope of wringing part of the produce of their labours from that indefatigable people. The territory occupied by their rivals did not, in fact, possess richer mines than those belonging to the Dutch provinces, the industry and perseverance of the Chinese alone rendering them more productive. The Dutch, however, fancying that the mines must be endowed with some natural superiority, despatched a body of troops to take possession of them ; and the Chinese, although unable to cope with their adversaries in



the field, endeavoured by every means in their power to drive them away. In the accomplishment of this attempt it must be confessed that they were not very scrupulous respecting the methods employed. They poisoned the wells, harassed the invaders by cutting off the supplies, and finally succeeded in compelling them to evacuate the territory.

Irritated by this unexpected resistance, and determined to destroy what they could not conquer, the Dutch now adopted a plan which had rarely been known to fail, and which was peculiarly applicable to the present case; by its means the Chinese, unwarlike except in defence of their property, and unacknowledged by a mother country which could protect them from the aggressions of a cruel and rapacious enemy, were soon reduced from a state of affluence and prosperity, to the most abject poverty and wretchedness. A sum of money was paid by the Dutch to the Sultan of Sambas, for permission to form a settlement at that place, and to monopolize the duties; the Chinese territory consequently became enclosed on two sides by the settlements of the Dutch; and the intermediate coast being blockaded by their gun-boats, the Chinese could



neither leave the country, nor carry on their accustomed intercourse with any foreign nation. The Chinese held out during several years, thinking that their enemies would not incur so much expense for any length of time, merely for the gratification of revenge ; but they were eventually obliged to come to terms, and agree to trade through the medium of the Dutch ports.

During these disturbances, the Chinese being unable to maintain a foreign commerce, were thrown upon their own resources ; and when quietude was restored, the Dutch expected that the trade would speedily become as extensive as before ; but they were greatly mistaken, for the Chinese had learned to exist without foreign productions, while the restrictions now so impolitically imposed upon commerce prevented them from purchasing or importing any single thing which was not absolutely necessary. Instead of indulging as heretofore in expensive articles of foreign produce and manufacture, every Chinese lives as economically as possible, in order to enable him to collect as speedily as possible sufficient riches to permit him to retire to his own country.

The Dutch derive their revenue from the monopolies of salt and opium, and from duties imposed



on all other goods; from a capitation tax on the Chinese under their immediate jurisdiction, from an impost on every Chinese that arrives at, or leaves the country.

Salt is brought from Java in vessels chartered by the government, and is delivered into the stores at Pontiana and Sambas at a cost of one guilder (1*s.* 8*d.*) per picul of 133 lbs., and as this is re-tailed at the rate of seven guilders per picul, the profit must be immense.

Those who are acquainted with the mode of life led by the natives of the Archipelago, must know how essentially necessary this article is to their very existence. Their food consists chiefly of rice and fish, and, as the latter can rarely be consumed in a fresh state, large quantities of salt are necessary for the cure in so warm a climate. With respect to the supply of salt, the interior of Borneo, like Africa, is dependent upon the frontier for the supply. The salt must be brought from the sea-coast, and the further it is taken into the interior, the more it increases in value; so much so, that at a Dyak town two hundred miles above Sambas, a measure of salt is exchanged for twenty times the quantity of rice. In the wilder parts of the island, cakes of salt made by burning sea-weed,



are used by the Dyaks in lieu of coin as a currency.

The opium duties are farmed for a large sum by the Sultan and some of the pangerans; and the government also acquires a considerable revenue by farming out to individuals the exclusive privilege of retailing pork, arrack, betel, &c. These measures press very heavily upon the people, not only by causing them to pay twice the value of the articles they may require, but by the acts of petty tyranny to which their enforcement gives rise.

The capitation tax is only levied on the Chinese, its annual amount is two guilders per head, and those who arrive in the country pay the same sum; while a *tael* of gold, more than £5 sterling, is extorted from those who depart.

These illiberal measures have not had the effect of increasing the revenue, and it is supposed that the government sustains an annual loss of at least fifty thousand guilders. It is surprising that they still pursue a system which calls forth the execration of every friend of the human race, and at the same time empties their own pockets. Before the arrival of the Dutch in 1823, the west coast enjoyed an extensive commerce; for besides a considerable trade with various parts of the Archi-



pelago and Western India, about fifteen large junks came annually from China. The enterprising Cochin Chinese also visited the coast in considerable numbers for the disposal of their produce, until some of their vessels were seized and confiscated by the Dutch. The trade thus carried on, together with that which existed with Arabia and other parts of Western Asia, has been totally annihilated, and the annual number of junks from China is now reduced to four. Of these, two visit Sambas, bringing all kinds of Chinese produce and manufactures for the supply of the settlers.

The principal exports of the west coast of Borneo are gold\* and diamonds; unlimited quantities of other valuable articles can be procured, but the commercial restrictions prevent their being sought after. Among these may be mentioned camphor, of an excellent quality, bees'-wax, deer-horns, a kind of ebony, dammer or pitch, wood, oil, &c. All these are in great demand for the China market, but the only portion of the community which

\* The annual amount of gold-dust imported at Singapore, from the western coast of Borneo, averages three thousand eight hundred ounces troy. This is brought by native vessels from Sambas and Pontiana, and is sometimes smuggled direct from Sinkawan in Chinese pukats. It is probably about one-tenth of the produce of the mines.



is likely to collect them, the Chinese, scrupulously abstain from the production of a greater number of articles than are absolutely necessary for their own consumption, in order that the Dutch may collect as little revenue as possible from them. This system is carried to so great an extent, that the surplus of the rice crop in the Chinese territory is allowed to rot on the ground, its exportation, even to the Dutch settlements, where it would meet with a ready sale, being prohibited by their own laws.\*

The camphor tree† attains a considerable size, some being fifteen or sixteen feet in circumference, and proportionately high. To procure the camphor, the tree is cut down and split into pieces, the drug being found in small internal fissures. Wood-oil is collected in an equally simple manner from a tree which abounds throughout the island. A hole which will contain about half-a-gallon is made in the trunk, into which a lighted torch is introduced

\* During my second visit to Sinkawan, I was permitted, as a favour, to take a few piculs with me, for which I paid half the price usually charged at Singapore; and it was of such an excellent quality, that, although it required much cleaning, some of my Chinese friends at Singapore used it in preference to any that could be procured there.

† The camphor of Borneo, which is similar, but superior to the famous Barus camphor of Sumatra, is different from that used in England, the latter being the produce of China.



for the purpose of attracting the oil contained in the wood ; this is soon removed, and in the course of a few hours the hole will be found nearly filled with oil.

Bezaar stones, which were formerly much valued for their supposed medicinal qualities, are sometimes to be met with. They are said to be procured from the intestines of an animal which is found in the island, but whether from a deer or a monkey I could not correctly ascertain.

Before the Dutch took possession of the west coast of Borneo in 1823, about three thousand Chinese arrived annually as settlers, but immigration has now almost totally ceased. No census has been taken of the Dutch and Chinese territories ; but the following rough estimate will be found to be tolerably correct :

|                                 |         |
|---------------------------------|---------|
| Chinese*                        | 150,000 |
| Malays                          | 50,000  |
| Bugis                           | 10,000  |
| Arabs                           | 400     |
| Javanese and Amboynese soldiers | 150     |
| Dutch                           | 80      |

\* Of these ninety thousand inhabit the Chinese districts, and the others occupy the parts under the control of the Dutch. The governor of Montradok informed me that the population of his districts amounted to 110,000, but I think this was an over estimate.



The Dyak population within the ken of the settlements is considered to amount to two hundred and fifty thousand.

The western coast of Borneo possesses several large rivers, but those of Sambas and Pontiana are the most important. The former has been ascended to about eighty miles by the Dutch, who found nothing that would obstruct the navigation of vessels of moderate burthen to the distance of fifty miles from the mouth ; and it is said by the Dyaks that canoes can ascend to within two days' walk of Borneo Proper. The main river is joined in its course by numerous tributary streams which wind through the country in all directions, and are often connected by means of smaller channels. Thus the town of Sambas is built upon an island containing about two hundred and fifty square miles, which is formed by a channel three fathoms deep, connecting the tributary stream on which the town is erected with the main river.

The river of Pontiana, the mouth of which is ninety miles to the southward of Sambas, is inferior in point of size, but the town situated near its mouth forms the chief residency of the Dutch on the west coast. Sambas, although of more im-



portance in a commercial point of view than Pontiana, in other respects only takes the second rank. The Dutch have a third settlement at Landak, a town seventy miles up one of the branches of the Pontiana river, near which the most productive of the diamond mines are found. In 1823 a party from Pontiana ascended the southern branch to the distance of two hundred and fifty miles, but no account of the expedition having been made public, I was obliged to procure all the information which I could obtain concerning it from a gentleman at Sambas, who happened to be intimately acquainted with the person to whose conduct it was entrusted. At the point to which they ascended the river was found to open out into an extensive lake, twenty-five miles in length, and nine in breadth, the depth of water exceeding three fathoms. The waters of this lake, which is called the Danau Malayu, or the Malay lake, were found to be well stored with excellent fish. There are two islands near the centre, to one of which the party gave the name of Van Der Capellen, after the governor of Dutch India at that time. The elevation of this lake, above the level of the sea, was estimated at only one hundred feet; but as a much greater height would be required to give



the stream the force which it possesses, in all probability the perpendicular heights of the falls the travellers met with on ascending the river must only have been calculated, one of which was upwards of twenty-five feet. Its latitude was estimated at  $1^{\circ}5'$  N., and its distance from the west coast, in a straight line, at a hundred and forty miles. Many Dyaks were found upon its banks, but whether they possessed vessels of a superior description to those on the rivers, I could not ascertain. Every lover of geographical science must anxiously look forward to the speedy attainment of more accurate knowledge respecting this interesting island. The conduct of the Dutch authorities, in keeping the information secret which they have been able to collect concerning the various countries of the Archipelago, the details of which would prove so interesting to science, does not form the least reprehensible portion of their transactions in the east. The silence which they have observed can only be accounted for, either by the dread which they entertain of the arrival of strangers, who might be attracted to their Indian possessions, were the capabilities of the countries, so long misruled, to be generally known; or to their dislike to have the system upon which they have acted



made a topic of conversation, since, in that event, enquiries might be instituted of a political nature which would be far from agreeable.

The Dyaks, who are the Orang-Benua, or aboriginal inhabitants of Borneo, constitute, by far the most interesting portion of its population, and I regret that the peculiar circumstances under which I was placed, prevented me from collecting a fuller body of information concerning them. Continually harassed by circumstances which I have thought it unnecessary to detail, from the period of my arrival on the coast to that of my departure, I was kept in a state of constant anxiety for the safety of the expedition, and although a desire to obtain a personal knowledge of Borneo and its inhabitants, formed one of my principal objects in undertaking the responsibility of the command, I considered it to be my duty to direct my chief attention to the furtherance of the interests of those who had entrusted me with the charge of a valuable vessel and cargo.

The Dyaks are scattered in small tribes over the face of the island, those inhabiting the banks of the large rivers being generally under the dominion of one more powerful than the rest; but the tribes which reside in the depths of the forests,



where the communication between them is more difficult, are generally perfectly distinct from each other, and these people would scarcely know that other human beings existed beside themselves, were not individuals of their little communities sometimes cut off by the roving warriors of a distant, and more powerful tribe.

From the peculiar and extraordinary state of society, of which I have attempted to give a description in the ensuing pages, the various inland tribes are totally cut off from social intercourse with each other, and therefore each speaks a dialect often unintelligible even to the people of the district immediately adjacent. Under such circumstances, improvement is perfectly impracticable; they have in all probability existed in their present state during the lapse of ages, and without foreign intercourse must continue in the same condition for ever.

The various tribes are said to differ considerably from each other, an assertion which I do not pretend to dispute, although my own experience would go to prove the contrary, since I saw individuals belonging to several distinct tribes, who, with the exception of a difference of dialect, might be recognized as the same people, those who lived



entirely on the water being much darker than the rest. It is said by the Dyaks themselves, that some parts of the interior are inhabited by a woolly-haired people; but as they also assert that men with tails like monkeys, and living in trees, are also discoverable, the accuracy of their accounts may be doubted. I met with no Dyak who had seen either, but as a woolly-haired people is to be found scattered over the interior of the Malay Peninsula, their existence in Borneo seems by no means improbable.

My observations, however, will be confined to the natives with whom I became personally acquainted, and in the account which I have given concerning some of the customs which I had not an opportunity of witnessing, I have taken care to avail myself only of local information of undoubted authenticity.

The Dyaks are of the middle size, and, with the exception of those who are continually cramped up in their little canoes, are invariably straight-limbed and well formed. Their limbs are well rounded, and they appear to be muscular, but where physical strength is to be exerted in carrying a burthen, they are far inferior to the more spare-bodied Chinese settlers. Their feet are short



and broad, and their toes turn a little inwards, so that in walking they do not require a very wide path.\* Their foreheads are broad and flat, and their eyes, which are placed farther apart than those of Europeans, appear longer than they really are, from an indolent habit of keeping the eye half closed. The outer corners are generally higher up the forehead than those nearer to the nose, so that were a straight line drawn perpendicularly down the face, the eyes would be found to diverge a little from right angles with it. Their cheek-bones are prominent, but their faces are generally plump, and their features altogether bear a greater resemblance to those of the Cochin Chinese than

\* The native paths are found very inconvenient by an European traveller. On my visit to the gold-mines, I obtained practical experience of this fact. The paths used by the Dyaks and Chinese being generally worn down several inches below the surface of the soil, and, as they were very little wider than the foot, pedestrian exercise proved both painful and fatiguing. The Chinese guides told me that I should soon become accustomed to these by-ways, from which I judged that the settlers had adopted the native mode of walking, with one foot before the other, since their arrival in the country, and I was the more inclined to this supposition from the circumstance of the two interpreters having soon knocked up; one of them, a native of the east coast of China, a stout paunchy man, must have been particularly distressed, since he was in the habit of walking with his toes pointed out at the angle of 45°.



of any other of the demi-civilized nations in Eastern India.\* The hair is strait and black, and is kept cut rather short by both sexes, but if permitted, would grow to a great length. Some of the Dyak women who are married to Chinese, adopt the fashion of wearing tails. I never saw a nearer approach to a beard among the men, than a few straggling hairs scattered over the chin and the upper lip.

The Dyak countenance is highly prepossessing, more so than that of any people I have yet encountered. On only one occasion did I ever perceive a decidedly sulky expression, and that was in the case of a lady who had been treated rather indecorously by some Malays. Those whom I saw for the first time (except in one instance on my return from the gold mines), always cast their eyes on the ground, and sometimes turned away their faces in a manner similar to that of a bashful

\* The Laos tribes inhabiting the inland parts of Cochin China and Cambodia are undoubtedly the same race as the Dyaks, speaking a dialect of the same language; and, as the Cochin Chinese are probably descendants of these people, civilized by communication with the Chinese, the resemblance may be easily accounted for. The Cochin Chinese, however, are physically superior to the Dyaks, the natural results of a different mode of life.



child ; but by pretending to take no notice of them, and conversing with some one who happened to be present, they would, after a time, venture to steal an occasional glance, and if they understood Malay, I generally managed eventually to draw them into conversation. Their bashful manner, however, rarely wore off entirely, even after frequent meetings.

The countenances of the Dyak women, if not exactly beautiful, are generally extremely interesting, which is, perhaps, in a great measure owing to the soft expression given by their long eye-lashes, and by their habit of keeping the eyes half closed. In form they are unexceptionable, and the Dyak wife of a Chinese, whom I met with at Sinkawan, was, in point of personal attractions, superior to any eastern beauty who has yet come under my observation, with the single exception of one of the same race, from the north-west coast of Celebes.\* Many of the Chinese on the west coast of Borneo are married to Dyak women, and their exemplary conduct, both as wives and mothers, is very highly spoken of.

\* This lady, whom I met with at Sourabaya soon after her arrival from Celebes, was (for a native) extremely fair, and her portrait would not have disgraced the "Book of Beauty."



No matrimonial connexion has, I believe, ever been formed between a Malay of Sambas and a Dyak female ; probably not from any disinclination on the part of the Malays, but in consequence of the powerful opposition that they might expect, since their female acquaintances (for the Malay women are extremely jealous of the superior personal charms of the Dyaks,) would either force them to give up their brides, or would find some means to remove the rival beauties. I trust that this spirit will long continue on the part of the fair disputants, for it is only from the non-existence of social intercourse between the aboriginal inhabitants and the Malays, that the Dyaks near Sambas are still uncontaminated by their dissolute neighbours.

In complexion, the Dyaks are much fairer than the Malays, from whom they also differ greatly in disposition and general appearance, although not so much so as to lead to the conclusion that they could not have sprung from the same source, giving rather the idea that the cause of the dissimilarity has proceeded from the long disconnection of the Malays from the original stock, in addition to their admixture and intercourse with foreign nations. The Dyaks are a much superior



people to the Malays, although the latter affect to consider them as beings little removed from the orang-outan.

The most numerous of the aboriginal tribes are found congregated in villages on the banks of the rivers and the large inland lakes ; but they also possess several towns of considerable size. The capital of the most powerful tribe on the west coast is Sigao, a town about forty days' journey up the Pontiana river, which has a population of several thousands.

The Dyaks inhabit thatched bamboo-houses, erected upon piles, those belonging to each family or petty tribe being joined together by means of a stage or verandah running along the front. Many of the small villages are defended by stockades, and the ladders by which they ascend into their dwellings are always pulled up when they retire to rest at night. Under these dwellings the pigs are kept ; for, although some of the tribes in the vicinity of the Malays have adopted the Mussulman religion, they are not sufficiently rigid in their observance of its tenets to abstain from the use of pork.

The Dyaks cultivate rice in large quantities, as it forms their principal vegetable food, their



animal sustenance being pork, fish, and the flesh of deer, and other animals which are procured by the chase.

Their domestic relations towards each other, that is to say, towards members of their own family or tribe, are of a mild nature, according with their general dispositions. A man marries only one wife, and the old people are always respected, the head of a family being looked up to as a chief.

Their love of finery, which is very great, is principally displayed by the women, who adorn their heads and necks with little blue and white beads, the manufacture of Great Britain and China, which are eagerly sought after for the purpose. The men of some of the more distant tribes tattoo their bodies, but the practice is not general among the tribes in the neighbourhood of the foreign settlers. The chiefs adorn their heads with the feathers of large birds, which are stuck erect in a bandage encircling the head, in a manner precisely similar to that adopted by the aboriginal natives of South America. The chiefs of a friendly tribe which visited Sambas in 1833, were all thus decorated.

Some of the Dyaks employ themselves in col-



lecting gold-dust, which is obtained chiefly by washing the waters of the streams, since they entertain a supposition that working the mines will entail some serious misfortune on the country.

The gold-dust, together with bees'-wax, and occasionally small quantities of iron, are disposed of by barter to the Malays, in exchange for red and blue cotton cloths, beads, brass-wire, salt, and tobacco. These goods are taken to the nearest Dyak town by the Malays, where they are sold to the inhabitants, who retain what they require, and dispose of the remainder to the people of the town immediately above them; and in this manner they pass from hand to hand, increasing greatly in price at every town until they are all appropriated. The chiefs do not approve of the passage of strange trading-boats beyond their towns, and generally force the owners to dispose of their cargoes, in order that their own people may secure some share of the profits.

The iron which is obtained in the interior is said to be valued by many of the wilder Dyaks even more than gold; indeed the latter is only sought for as the means of procuring foreign articles, for which they have acquired a taste. The iron must either be of an excellent quality, or the Dyaks



have discovered a method of tempering it, which sets at defiance the competition of more civilized nations. I have heard of musket-barrels having been cut in two by a single blow of one of their swords, together with other tales illustrative of their wonderful temper; and from what I have personally witnessed, I am inclined to give perfect credence to them. To test the capabilities of these weapons, I cut a twopenny nail in two, and although the temper of the one employed was considered as rather inferior, the edge was not in the least turned or injured. The blades of their swords are about two feet long, slightly curved, broad at the end, and bear a great resemblance to Turkish scymetars. They can only be used in cutting, being in this respect dissimilar to the favourite weapon of the Malays, the *kris*, which is intended for stabbing alone, and therefore perfectly useless as a cutting instrument.

Some of the tribes possess bows and arrows, but the sumpit or blow-pipe, a wooden tube about five feet long, through which small bamboo arrows are shot with great precision, is in more general use. The arrows are steeped in the most subtle poison, which destroys birds and smaller animals, when struck with them, almost instantaneously, a slight



wound from an arrow on which the poison is strong, being said to occasion inevitable death, even to man. The effects of weapons of this description are always exaggerated by those who use them; the poison, therefore, is not, in all probability, so destructive to the human species as it is represented; and although the Dyaks assert that no antidote is known, yet the preparation of the poison being similar to that practised by the aboriginal inhabitants of Celebes, for which a remedy has been discovered, the people of Borneo are probably acquainted with it. They shew no hesitation in eating animals which have been killed by their arrows, taking the precaution, however, of removing the flesh immediately adjacent to the wounded part. The poison, which is called *ippo* throughout the island, consists of the juice of a tree, and its mode of preparation appears to be perfectly similar to that practised in Java, and other islands where it is employed.

Concerning the religion of those Dyaks who have not been converted to Mahomedanism, I was enabled to discover that they believed in a Supreme Being, and in the existence of a future state. Some reverence is paid to deer, and great respect is shown towards a black bird, resembling



a magpie, which is considered to be an evil spirit ; but that portion of their creed which obtains the greatest influence over their mode of life, arises from a supposition which they entertain that the owner of every human head which they can procure will serve them in the next world. The system of human sacrifice is, upon this account, carried to so great an extent, that it totally surpasses that which is practised by the Battas of Sumatra, or, I believe, by any people yet known. A man cannot marry until he has procured a human head, and he who is in possession of several may be distinguished by his proud and lofty bearing : for the greater number of heads which a man has obtained, the greater will be his rank in the next world ; and this opinion naturally induces his associates to consider him entitled to superior consideration upon earth. A man of consequence cannot be inhumed until a human head has been procured by his friends ; and at the conclusion of peace between two tribes, the chief of each presents a prisoner to the other to be sacrificed on the spot.

The loss of human life occasioned by these latter-named ceremonies, falls far short of that which is produced by the necessity of obtaining a



human head to grace the marriage rites, a necessity which tends so strongly to check the increase of population, that had the lawgiver who introduced it apprehended that the island would speedily become too thickly inhabited, he could not have hit upon a more efficacious mode of prevention, since had the batchelors been permitted to cut off the heads of persons belonging to their own tribe, instead of being obliged to confine their aggressions to strangers, the entire population of the island must eventually have been extirpated.

The possession of a human head cannot be considered as a proof of the bravery of the owner, for it is not necessary that he should have killed the victim with his own hand, his friends being permitted to assist him, or even to perform the act themselves.

The chiefs sometimes make excursions of considerable duration for the sole purpose of acquiring heads, in order that they may be assured of having a numerous body of attendants in the next world. If they are at peace with their neighbours they proceed in their canoes to the more distant parts of the country, to which the numerous ramifications of the rivers afford them easy access. Upon their arrival near a village, if the party be



small, they take up their position in the bushes close to some pathway, and attack a passer-by un-awares. If the party be large, they are bolder in their operations, and an attempt will perhaps be made to surprise a whole village. For this purpose they will remain concealed in the jungle on the banks of the river during the day, and at night will surround the village so completely as to prevent the escape of the intended victims; and an hour or two before daybreak, when the inhabitants are supposed to sleep the soundest, the attack will be commenced by setting fire to the houses, and their victims are destroyed as they endeavour to escape.

It is said that some of the tribes consider the heads of women and children to be more valuable than those of the men, but this is merely hearsay; and though perhaps, upon some occasions, the helpless portion of the community may be accidentally made victims, I am convinced that the practice is not general, the women and children being more frequently retained as slaves.

The heads obtained on these occasions are dried and brought home by the captors, and are then stuck up in the most conspicuous places about their houses, the teeth being sometimes extracted and worn round the head and neck in lieu of beads.



A year or two before my arrival on the coast, the entire population of Slaku, a town situated a few miles distant from the mouth of the Sambas river, was cut off during a night attack by a powerful tribe of wild Dyaks from the north-west coast; and although the town, which was occupied chiefly by Chinese, contained large quantities of rich merchandize, they were contented with the iron and trifles, with which, together with the heads of their victims, they departed unmolested to their homes. Their canoes were made from a single tree, but were much larger than those used by the tribes inhabiting the banks of the rivers, some of them having contained from forty to fifty men. They swept the whole coast from their native place, Serassan, to Sambas, and the news of their aggressions having been brought to the latter place by some individuals who had been fortunate enough to escape them, several Dutch cruise prahus were stationed at the mouth of the river to prevent their passing to the southward; but the Malays who composed their crews retreated to the town on the first symptoms of their near approach, although they might easily have stopped the career of the Dyaks, who entertain the greatest dread of fire-arms, believing that there is no limit to their range,



and that an object which can be perceived, however distant, may be struck by a musket ball. None of the inhabitants of Slaku survived to tell the tale, but it is probable that they were either unaware of the Dyaks being on the coast, or felt confident that the cruise prahus would prevent them from passing Sambas, and therefore kept no watch, and were surprised in their sleep.

The Dyaks themselves can give no account of the origin of this custom, and it will now be impossible to trace it to its source. Apparently the practice is only general among those tribes inhabiting the banks of the large rivers, on which distant voyages can be made with facility, the Dyaks in the northern parts of the island being content with an occasional human sacrifice on the death of a chief.

There is very little doubt that some of the tribes are cannibals, but the system does not obtain among those in the vicinity of Sambas, although these latter assert that the people immediately beyond them are greatly addicted to it. A traveller, however, must be very cautious in fixing the stigma of cannibalism on a people, merely on the faith of a report circulated by a neighbouring tribe, since it is a general custom among barbarous nations to



assert that their enemies are anthropophagi; in fact if the hostile tribes belong to the same people, the assertion will generally be found to be further from the truth according to the degree of horror betrayed by the accusers, as it would be very improbable that two adjacent tribes of the same race could differ so greatly in such a remarkable particular.

From the horrid practice of human sacrifice which obtains among the Dyaks, it may be thought that all attempts to improve them would be hopeless, but before we arrive at such a conclusion, a glance should be taken at the ancient history of Great Britain. So far from being irreclaimable, the dreadful nature of their mode of life renders them the more willing to adopt milder customs; and I feel confident in asserting that no people on earth, with the exception, perhaps, of their counterparts, the natives of South America, are so susceptible of civilization. This has been proved by the readiness with which the tribes occupying the country near the settlements of the Malays and Bugis have adopted the Mahomedan religion, almost without an effort on the part of their converters; for the Malays, farther advanced in knowledge, but infinitely inferior in natural dis-



position to the Dyaks, took no pains to induce them to discontinue their practice of wholesale murder, rather regarding their attacks upon each other as actions affording amusement.

The Dyaks in the Chinese territory have totally abandoned their barbarous customs, and are milder in their conduct, and apparently in their disposition, than any of the natives of the Archipelago that I have met with. The horrid massacres perpetrated by the wilder Dyaks, would seem to sanction a contrary opinion, but it must be considered that the individuals who now engage in these frightful outrages, have been brought up from infancy to consider the slaying of a fellow creature in the light of a meritorious action, in fact, one of the most acceptable services which they could perform. Should the view which I have taken of the character of these people be correct, their shocking pursuit of human victims will only tend to show how strong an influence the force of habit, and the circulation of particular doctrines, can exercise over minds naturally indisposed to cruelty. Freedom of commerce, which has hitherto been found the best instrument of civilization, would rapidly improve the condition of these people, and were an European settlement, with a



free port, established on one of the numerous large rivers, the Dyaks would soon be brought into communication with it, for they are greatly addicted to commerce, and spare no pains to procure articles of foreign manufacture for which they have acquired a taste.

From the Dutch settlements on the west coast, civilization might be disseminated with facility throughout the whole island, but unfortunately the government is too much occupied in protecting its ruinous commercial monopolies, to pay any attention, even if it were so inclined, to the welfare and happiness of the people. It is a fact acknowledged even by the Dutch themselves, that the Dyaks have retrograded since their establishment on the coast, indeed many tribes formerly holding intercourse with the settlements, have discontinued their visits. The disgraceful system pursued by the European power which has obtained a footing in Borneo, has proved far more injurious to the aborigines than to the other native inhabitants; it has stayed their progress towards improvement, and has reduced many individuals to the most abject misery; persons who formerly indulged in foreign products, now find it impossible, in consequence of the heavy increase in the price, to



purchase those articles which they have learned to appreciate, and which have now become almost necessary to their existence.

Were two or three of the Dutch missionaries, who have worked so much real good in those places in which they have been untrammelled by their government, to establish themselves among the Dyaks, their labours would be of incalculable benefit, although the speedy conversion of these people might be retarded, since the Malays would not fail to poison their ears against all religious adventurers professing a different creed, it unfortunately being in their power to prevent, in a great measure, their more ignorant neighbours from deriving any advantage from instruction.

The Dyaks of the western part of Borneo do not appear to have ever been much farther advanced in civilization than they are at the present time; but brazen images, ruins of temples, and other relics of Hindu worship are to be seen in the inland districts near Banjar Massin on the south coast, which may be accounted for by the fact that a colony was established at this place from Java, during the period in which Hinduism prevailed in the latter island.

The relics of an ancient people are also to be



met with in the inland parts of the west coast, and, although the information I was enabled to collect concerning them was extremely vague, I came to the conclusion that they were a race distinct from the Hindus near Banjar Massin. These relics consist merely of tumuli, in which are sometimes found small earthen jars, and being supposed by the Dyaks to be connected in some manner with the ashes of their forefathers, are in all probability graves. The jars are very scarce, and are so highly valued by their possessors on account of their supposed oracular powers, that the offer of a sum equal to five hundred pounds sterling has been refused for one of them. The jars are consulted by their owners before they undertake any expedition, and they believe that it will be prosperous or the contrary according to the sound produced, probably by water being poured into it. I much regretted being unable to inspect one of these vessels, as their materials and manufacture might possibly throw some light upon the relation which the natives of Borneo bear to the people of some other parts of India.

The Dyaks are apparently of the same race as the Battas of Sumatra, the Laos of continental India, and the Arafuras of Celebes, Gilolo, New



Guinea (the inland inhabitants), and of the other larger islands in the Archipelago, all of whom speak dialects of the same language, and among whom the system of human sacrifice also exists, but not to so great an extent as with the Dyaks of western Borneo. The Battas slay and eat prisoners of war and criminals, and the Arafuras and the aborigines of the northern parts of Borneo occasionally slay a human victim when they imagine the deity to be offended, the heads being invariably preserved, probably as records of the event.

Many individuals in Europe are of opinion that the Dyaks are descended from the Chinese, and the latter themselves entertain the same supposition; one fact, however, will tend greatly to weaken this notion. The Dyaks, even those who reside constantly with the Chinese settlers, can never attain the pronunciation, or even a correct knowledge of the idiom of the language spoken by the latter, a circumstance which does not arise from any deficiency of intellect or application in the Dyaks, since they acquire a perfect knowledge of the Malay and Bugis tongues with the greatest facility. The formation of the two latter, however, and many of the words they contain, are perfectly



similar to the dialects of the Dyaks, which accounts for the readiness with which they are acquired.\*

I could not discover any written character among the Dyaks of western Borneo, but it is said that those of the southern parts near Banjar Massin possess one.

Although it is my object rather to show the present state of the Dyaks than to make any endeavour to trace their connexion with any other people, yet as my remarks may induce some future traveller in Borneo to institute some inquiries into the subject, I cannot refrain from noticing the extraordinary and almost perfect resemblance which the Dyaks bear to those aboriginal tribes in South America which occupy a similar description of country; namely, those who are found on the banks of the great rivers in Guiana; indeed, more difficulty would be experienced in discovering the particulars in which they differ from each other, than in tracing the resemblance.

\* The dialect spoken by the Chinese settlers, who are of that tribe which forms the lower class at Canton, is certainly more barbarous in its pronunciation than any I have ever heard spoken by the people of China; but one of my interpreters, a native of the east coast of that empire, had acquired a perfect knowledge of it.



## CHAPTER IX.

### VISIT TO THE GOLD MINES, AND TO THE CAPITAL OF THE CHINESE COLONY.

Return to Sinkawan.—Departure for Montradok.—Appearance of the Country.—Sedan Chairs.—Exhausted Gold Mines.—The Great Plain of Montradok.—Arrival at the Capital.—Gold and Diamond Mines.—A Meeting of Congress.—Habits and Form of Government of the Chinese Colonists.—Notions of the Chinese concerning the Origin of the Dyaks.—Alarming Reports from the Sea Coast.—Depart for Sinkawan.—Interview with some Dyaks.—Pirates.—Commercial Transactions with the Kung Se.—Mode of Bargaining.—Clamorous Purchasers.—Excursion to the Neighbouring Islands.—Pig Hunting.—Return to Singapore.—Remarks on the Obstacles to a Commercial Intercourse with Western Borneo.

WE arrived at Sinkawan on the 18th of April, where I found a letter at the town from the Chinese governor, containing an invitation to Montradok, the capital, which I very gladly accepted. It pleased me the more from being totally unexpected, especially as I had been informed at Sambas, that the Chinese allowed neither Euro-



pean nor Malay to penetrate into their territory.\* The boat was despatched on board for some necessities, as I determined to remain on shore during the night, to be ready to start at daylight in the morning, before the sun became distressingly powerful. In the evening, myriads of musquitoes arose from the swamps, and prevented me from sleeping for several hours after I had retired to rest; but they appeared to have very little effect upon the slumbers of the Chinese, who must either have been musquito-proof, or had become accustomed to their attacks.

At day-break in the morning, I commenced my journey, being accompanied by six of the Kung Se's men, my two interpreters, and two Chinese kulis, for the conveyance of the baggage. The first five miles of our journey lay in an easterly direction through a swampy jungle, the path being formed upon trees, felled for the purpose, and laid lengthwise, the ends touching each other.

\* At Montradok it was said that an Englishman had visited that town several years previously. I have since made many inquiries upon the subject, but have been unable to discover the name or calling of the individual, or any circumstances connected with the visit; but as the Chinese could have had no object in deceiving me, I have no doubt of the correctness of the statement.



The trunks of these trees being in their primitive state, that is, perfectly circular, I found it very difficult to walk on them, and slipped into the swamp several times ; but the Chinese being unincumbered with shoes, were enabled to keep their footing.

After crossing the swamp, we ascended a hill, and, on arriving at the top, a sudden turn of the path brought to view one of the finest prospects I had ever beheld. Immediately below us stretched an extensive valley, teeming with cultivation and covered with villages and cottages ; the Sinkawan river, here about fifteen yards wide, winding through it. The south-east side of the valley was bounded by a range of mountains, about fifteen hundred feet in elevation ; but to the north-west, the ground stretched in gentle undulations, as far as the eye could reach.

Our path led through a series of gardens, which, in addition to many kinds of culinary vegetables, produced sugar cane, maize, plantains, and a variety of fruits. After a delightful walk through the valley for about three miles, crossing the river several times by means of wooden bridges, we arrived at the large village where we were to breakfast. The street was crowded with people,



who left a small space in the centre for us to pass on to the court-house, where I found the Kung Se had prepared an excellent repast, having been informed of my intended visit by a messenger, who had been sent to Montradok from the coast the previous night.

After leaving this place, we continued our route in a north-east direction. A few miles beyond the village, we crossed several trenches about three feet wide, and from three to fifteen feet deep, which I discovered to be exhausted gold mines. The soil in which the trenches were dug was of a clayey nature, and rather poor, but not so much so as to render its cultivation unprofitable, for the rice fields in the neighbourhood appeared to be in a very flourishing condition. We continued to cross these trenches for about six miles, the distance between them being from twenty yards to half a mile, and then struck to the south-east over several ranges of small hills, the valleys between them being generally cultivated.

Many of the farmers' cottages were built of unburnt bricks, and covered with thatch, and being invariably surrounded and shaded by fruit-trees, they bore a stronger resemblance to those which adorn an English landscape than any habitations



I had seen since my departure from my own home.

Houses for the entertainment of travellers were erected at intervals on the road-side, and at noon we entered one of them to rest ourselves, and to partake of some refreshment. The landlady, a Chinese, about forty years old, who had the sole direction of the household affairs, was the most obliging individual whom I met with on the journey, the selection of the house by the guides having probably been made on account of the known excellence of her disposition. Displaying no idle curiosity, our kind hostess immediately commenced the preparations for our entertainment, bustling about, and scolding her two hand-maidens, who in a few minutes, perhaps in consequence of this admonishment, placed a duck on the fire to grill ; a dish containing a preparation of rice, much resembling maccaroni, being put before me to employ my time until the duck should be ready for the table.

When about to depart, my two people declared themselves to be knocked up, and a messenger was therefore sent into a neighbouring village in order to procure men to carry them. Four able-bodied Chinese soon arrived with several bamboos



on their shoulders, which being speedily manufactured into handbarrows, my friends were placed upon them, and bore away towards Montradok. We soon got a-head of these gentry, for they could only proceed slowly, while two of the bearers appeared to be already discontented with their burden, who happened to be a very stout person, and, as I anticipated, they speedily set him down, and would not proceed until they were promised double fare.

After considerable toil we ascended the last of the range of hills, from the top of which we enjoyed a view of the great plain of Montradok. A few trees were scattered over its surface, many parts of which were cultivated, and the exhausted gold mines, winding over it like snakes, could be easily discerned by the dark lines they formed in the verdure. A lake, about two miles in circumference, lay immediately below us, and the town of Montradok, six miles distant, appeared like a brown patch amid the surrounding vegetation. No hills of any great elevation were to be seen towards the interior, with the exception of a peaked mount, perhaps a thousand feet high, about thirty miles inland. I found the lake to be artificial, formed by a dam thrown across a valley



through which ran a small stream, the water being thus collected for the purpose of giving the current sufficient force to wash the mould from the gold-ore.

At three o'clock we passed through Montradok, which consists of a single street, three quarters of a mile long, and arrived at the governor's house, a building detached from the town, which may be distinguished from the others by its superior size, and by a tall young tree, with a bushy top, erected in front, like a flag-staff.

Although it was raining hard, the governor and the Kung Se met me at the gate of the courtyard, dressed in their best attire, and I was honoured with a salute of three guns, one of which, by the way, continued fizzing for five minutes before it went off. As we could not converse until the arrival of the interpreters, (neither the governor nor the Kung Se understanding a word of Malay,) our mutual civilities were only expressed in dumb show. Every attention was shown me, the best apartment being appropriated to my use, and no pains spared to procure everything that could conduce to my comfort.

Messengers had been sent out in the morning by the governor to invite all the Kung Ses to a



council, it not being his wish to make any arrangements before these officials had been consulted ; and as they were not expected until the next afternoon, I spent the morning in examining the gold mines in the neighbourhood. Those nearest to Montradok were about four miles to the eastward, the gold being found in the same description of stiff soil as that of the exhausted mines I had crossed on my journey.

The soil which contains the metal is here found in small veins from eight to fifteen feet below the surface. If the depth of the vein be less than ten feet, a trench is dug, the whole of the upper stratum being removed, but if deeper, a shaft of three feet square is sunk perpendicularly into the vein, and the miner works into it about ten feet in both directions, sending the ore up in baskets. When it is all removed, another shaft is sunk into the vein twenty feet beyond the first, and the miner works back into the old excavation, extending his labours ten feet in the opposite direction.

The ore thus procured is removed to the nearest washing place, where a stream has been dammed up like a mill-pool, and a strong body of water being turned through a large wooden trough into



which the ore has been placed, the bulk of the dirt is thus removed: the metal being afterwards washed by hand in small bowls until perfectly cleaned.

A company of individuals generally club together to work a mine, two or more of the shareholders being appointed directors, these latter generally being wealthy merchants, who purchase the shares of the miners at a risk, supplying them with food and opium. I could not learn exactly the proportion in which the gold is distributed after being washed, but believe it to be nearly as follows:—the government claims one-fourth, and of the remainder, the shares of the washers are two-thirds greater than those of the labourers, who are only employed in mining.

The gold is found in very small particles, for the most part as fine as sand. Large specimens, however, are occasionally found, not in lumps, but in small irregular peices joined together by integuments, much resembling lead that has been melted and afterwards thrown into water. These are sometimes beaten up into lumps, but are generally divided, as the metal can then be better examined, and fraud more easily detected. The Sultan of Sambas formerly possessed a piece of



eighteen ounces, but when used as a currency it is rarely to be met with of a greater size than a sixpence.

The gold-dust is put up into small paper packets, each weighing a tael, or two Spanish dollars. The dust belonging to the Kung Ses is always better cleaned than any other, and bears a distinguishing mark, a stamp or chop upon the papers in which it is enveloped: the punishment for the adulteration of dust thus warranted, being the loss of the right hand of the offender.\* The gold is from seven to nine touch (eighteen to twenty-one carats,) the dark coloured metal being esteemed the best.

I did not visit the diamond mines, which were situated at too great a distance farther inland, but I understood that the diamonds were found in veins precisely similar to those of the gold. The stones are generally small and of good water; large ones, however, are occasionally found.

The Sultan of Matan, formerly the most powerful prince in Borneo, who has been reduced to poverty since the arrival of the Dutch, possesses

\* The gold dust is often adulterated with a glittering sand called *passir B'rni* or Borneo sand, from the place whence it is procured.



an uncut diamond of three hundred and seventy carats, but it is said not to be a true stone.

Rice and sugar were formerly exported from Sinkawan, but since the arrival of the Dutch their cultivation has been discontinued, the regulations of the latter being calculated to destroy all commercial enterprise, consequently many parts of this fertile territory which were formerly in a high state of cultivation, are now barren wastes.

At the time appointed, the Kung Ses of the neighbouring districts, to the number of about fifty, assembled in the great room of the governor's house, and after deliberating about half an hour, they all entered my apartment, and the governor informed me that they had agreed to open the port to me, and they hoped that hereafter their communication with Singapore would be more frequent. My inability to converse directly with the chief occasioned great inconvenience, in consequence of our being obliged to employ two interpreters, one a native of China, who turned the Tartar dialect spoken here into Chinese, which the other, a Malacca-born Chinese, delivered to me in Malay. In the evening, however, a Chinese acquainted with the Malay language arrived at the house, who had been sent for from the interior



by the governor, soon after my arrival, which afforded us an opportunity of conversing on many subjects which the governor did not choose to mention before my people.

I should rejoice to hear of the speedy improvement of the political condition of these industrious settlers, but fear that nothing of the kind will be accomplished, until their neighbours discover them to be so completely reduced as to be totally unable to afford them the revenue, now so inexorably wrung from their unwilling hands, in which event they will in all probability be left to themselves. This crisis seems fast approaching, unless the progress of impending ruin should be stayed by some active interference on the part of the British, whose duty it appears to be, to prevent the Dutch from depriving Sinkawan of the lucrative traffic which it might enjoy with Singapore, were not the former port closed by a blockade.

The inhabitants of Montradok, and of the whole settlement, are chiefly of that tribe which forms the lowest class at Canton, being, I believe, of Tartar origin: they are as dark as Malays, and very thin, a stout man being rarely met with. They are generally unamiable in their dispositions, and their conduct towards strangers is characterized



by rudeness and extortion, but this, as far as regards my case, may be attributed to the contemptuous manner in which they are permitted to treat Europeans in their own country, and to their tempers being soured by the wrongs they have received from the same race in the country of their adoption. For the extraordinary attention which I received from the authorities, which I must confess I had scarcely expected, I was mainly indebted to the governor, a man gifted with much political talent, who foresaw that great advantages must be derived from the establishment of a commercial intercourse with the British, and therefore endeavoured to encourage it by every means in his power.

As the Emperor of China acknowledges no colonies, the inhabitants of the settlement are not under the control of the mother country, and are therefore at liberty to establish any form of government they please. That which they have adopted appears to be well suited to their situation, the territory being divided into districts, each of which is governed by several representatives, elected by the people, every male inhabitant having a vote. The representatives, or Kung Se,\* elect the gover-

\* The Kung Se of each district average five in number, the best scholar being the secretary and chief man of business.



nor, who has the direction of all the affairs of the territory, domestic and foreign, but he is expected to consult the Kung Se when transacting any business of importance. The latter are entrusted with the administration of justice in their respective districts, but capital offences are always referred to the governor. They continue in office as long as it suits the pleasure of their constituents, who, on suspicion of misconduct, will depose the obnoxious members and elect others in their room: on these occasions I have every reason to believe that there are sometimes serious popular commotions.

The present governor has been in office ten years, and as he possesses the confidence of the people, it is likely that he will long continue at the head of affairs. He is a man of good natural abilities, and it is said that through his exertions alone the people were enabled to resist the encroachments of the Dutch, who would otherwise have gained possession of the country. The governor receives an annual salary of a thousand dollars, but the Kung Ses are unpaid.

There appeared to be very little distinction of rank among the people, for the Chinese kulis who carried my baggage, sat down to eat at the same



mat with the governor, and frequently dipped their chop-sticks into the same dish; this functionary, however, always occupied the upper end. The women joined in the meal, but they were chiefly employed in attending to the wants of the male portion of the company.

The Chinese women, of whom there are many born in the settlement, are all large footed. By this remark, however, I do not mean to insinuate that their feet are clumsy, or ill-proportioned, for they are generally as neat and as pretty as those which realize our ideas of beauty in other parts of the world, but they are not cramped and distorted in the manner which is employed to disfigure the upper classes of women in China. Here, as well as in every other part of the habitable globe, the kindness of the disposition of the female character displays itself in strong contrast to the rude uncourteous demeanour of half-civilized men; we found the women more amiable in their tempers, and more attentive to strangers than the male portion of the population, and, as the latter here happened to be rather morose and disagreeable, the gaiety and benevolence of the softer sex appeared in high relief. They enjoy as much liberty as



females possess in any part of Europe, and are almost invariably invested with the chief authority in household affairs.

Nearly all the males, and it is said a few of the females, indulge in opium smoking, and although the drug is expensive, the poorest classes are enabled to procure it. The opium is prepared by the addition of water mixed with it until the hard substance attains the consistence of treacle, it is then inhaled through a short hollow bamboo, furnished on one side with a small clay tube. A small portion of the mixture is taken up on an iron skewer, and placed between the flame of a wax taper and the mouth of the small tube, the smoke being drawn into the mouth through the bamboo. The smokers recline on couches, and sometimes inhale a sufficient quantity to cause a doze of several hours. Opium smoking, of course, produces a very injurious effect on the constitution, and those who are not addicted to it are readily distinguished among their countrymen by their more healthy appearance.

A small Dyak tribe under the protection of the Chinese, is established within a few miles of Montradok. The Chinese often intermarry with them, and many Dyak families are established among



them, it being the custom of the former when they marry Dyak women, to take the parents, and sometimes the whole family, under their protection.

The Chinese suppose the Dyaks to be descended from a large body of their countrymen left by accident upon the island, but this opinion is entertained solely on the faith of a Chinese legend. If they can prove their paternity to the Dyaks, they must extend it to the whole race inhabiting the interior of the larger islands in the Archipelago. They say that many hundred years ago a monstrous serpent existed in the interior of Borneo, which possessed a talisman of inestimable value, and that the sovereign of the Celestial empire, coveting so valuable a treasure, despatched a large fleet, with an immense body of men, to steal it from its lawful owner. The serpent was found asleep, and the men were stationed in a line extending from the sea-coast into the centre of the island, so close to each other that the talisman could be passed from hand to hand, until put on board the junks: but all these admirable arrangements were rendered of no avail by the clumsiness of the person appointed to steal the talisman, for the serpent awaking and seeing what was in the



wind, raised such a dust that the junks were blown off the coast, and the long line of "Celestials" were left to colonize the country.

It was my intention to remain at Montradok until the people of the distant districts should have had sufficient time to assemble at the seaport; but during the night of the 20th, a report being brought that a number of Lanun prahus had been seen on the coast, I decided on leaving the town on the following morning; for, aware that in the event of an attack on the schooner, no assistance could be expected from the cruise prahus, I felt anxious to be on board again. I took leave of my host over night, apparently to his regret, for he was making preparations for a play and other entertainments on the morrow.

We left the capital at break of day, and had a most fatiguing and unpleasant walk to Sinkawan, which was rendered the more so by the anxiety of my mind on account of the danger which threatened the schooner. We had scarcely commenced our journey before the rain descended in torrents, continuing, with little intermission, during the whole forenoon, a circumstance which created considerable difficulty in the ascent of some of the hills, for the water rushing impetuously down



the deep worn foot-paths, we were often scarcely able to keep our feet.

Near the house of my friend the hostess, where we again stopped to refresh, we encountered a Chinese and two Dyaks, who were returning from Sinkawan, whither they had been to purchase salt. The two latter were affected with a disease in the skin, which was covered in several places with minute white scales. I had previously seen several Dyaks affected in the like manner, but not to such an extent; and also several whom the disease had left, the skin being nearly white on the spots which had been affected. I heard nothing satisfactory alledged as the cause of this affliction, and I believe the Dyaks themselves were quite as much at a loss to account for it as myself; it is not considered in the least infectious, nor did it appear to alter the general health of the patients.\* These Dyaks appeared rather alarmed at the notice which they attracted, and kept their faces turned away, giving no answer to the questions I put to them through the medium of their Chinese friend; but one whom I met soon afterwards,

\* A disease noticed by Captain Cook among the South Sea islanders appears to be perfectly similar. It is generally supposed to be caused by ichthyophagy.



differed considerably from them in this respect, for much to my surprise, he addressed me in Malay, with "*Appa khaba, Tuan, deri Montradok?*" (What news, Sir, from Montradok?) I found that he had been either at Lara, or some other place visited by the Malays; and as he spoke the language well, I was sorry that my anxiety to arrive at the coast, prevented my remaining to converse with him.

On descending the last range of hills, I was rather alarmed at hearing great guns fired at intervals to seaward, as I had not the least doubt that the pirates, reported to have been seen near Sinkawan, were attacking the schooner. On entering the town, however, my anxiety was removed by perceiving the schooner's boat, with several of the crew lounging about her. On my approach, the cockswain informed me that about a dozen Lanun prahus had appeared in the offing the previous day, but after laying-to for two or three hours, had passed on to the southward; and that the guns were fired on board the Dutch cruise prahus (three having arrived from Sambas during my absence), which had retired into the river, and were endeavouring to frighten the pirates away. I went on board our vessel immediately, and found



that every preparation had been made to resist an attack, but the precautions were needless, for the Lanuns did not return.

The Dutch cruise prahus are of considerable force for small vessels, each carrying two nine-pounder guns and several swivels, with a crew of from eighteen to twenty-five Malays. The prahus are of the same construction as those of the Malays, and I believe they were originally built in this manner with a view to deceive the pirates; but as they carry distinguishing flags during the day, and beat large gongs at intervals throughout the night, an accidental rencontre with the rovers never takes place. During the whole time that the Dutch have been upon the coast, not a single instance has occurred of a piratical prahu being taken by them. Indeed they are solely employed in blockading the minor ports to prevent all foreign intercourse.

Before I left Montradok, the 24th of April had been fixed upon for the disposal of the cargo of the schooner, as the inhabitants of the more inland towns, who wished to purchase, would by that time be enabled to arrive at Sinkawan. The governor requested that nothing might be disposed of in the mean time to the people of the latter



place, as it would raise the jealousy of the inland inhabitants.

On the day appointed, I went with my Chinese men of business to the court-house, where we found a large body of people collected; and after a considerable time, and much argumentative discussion among themselves, the names of those who wished to purchase, and the quantity of each article which they required, were marked down on paper by the secretary. One of their number was then appointed to make the purchase of the entire cargo, after which it was to be divided among them in the proportion marked down in the list, this being the only plan we could adopt to prevent one of those disturbances which appear to be of frequent occurrence; for if anybody should be suspected of an endeavour to monopolize any commodity, particularly opium, he would run a great risk of losing his life.

The sale commenced with the opium, which was considered to be the most important article, and of which we had twenty chests, each containing about one hundred and fifty pounds. A mat being spread upon the floor, a chair was placed for me at the upper end; one of my interpreters, who also acted as head clerk, seated him-



self at my feet, the purchaser appointed by the colonists taking his station on the floor at the other end of the mat.

Each party was provided with a small wooden frame, having several bars across it, on which a number of small pierced wooden balls were strung: an instrument used by the Chinese for making calculations. The purchaser commenced with an offer for the opium, made by placing the wooden balls in such a position, as to indicate the amount he would give per chest; and the vender answered him by marking on his own instrument about three times the amount offered, as the price that he would receive. The people crowded about to note the progress of the bargain, gazing with the most intense interest on the men of business, and the silence was only broken when the vender informed me of the price offered, and enquired how much he should lower his demand. After about two hours of this tedious work, the bargain was concluded,\* and a number of fishing-boats were immediately despatched to bring the drug on

\* For the information of commercial men, the price of each chest afforded a profit of fifty pounds sterling, the entire profit being eighty pounds; but of this thirty pounds was paid as duty to the farmer of the opium at Sambas.



shore, the remainder of the vessel's cargo being readily disposed of during their absence.

When the opium arrived, there was a tremendous clamour among the purchasers, each of whom wished to have his proportion as soon as possible, to enable him to return home. The first chest which was landed was surrounded by a dense mass of people, demanding to have it opened immediately; and the head Kung Se, a little thin man, was nearly squeezed to death in the crowd while endeavouring to restrain their impetuosity. I had hitherto declined any interference in their arrangements, but I now proposed, that those whose homes were most distant should receive their quantum first; and the advice being attended to, after some demur, order was again restored. The quantity of opium marked down in the list amounted to about a hundred chests, and twenty only being forthcoming, no more than one-fifth of the stipulated weight could be delivered to the purchasers, a disappointment which occasioned some discontent. I had nothing to do with the distribution, however, the Kung Ses holding themselves responsible to me for the quantity I had sold.

On the 28th of April, the cargo having all been



delivered, the schooner was removed to one of the Lamukatan islands, where ballast and water could be procured with greater facility than at Sinkawan, a few Chinese being left at the latter place to examine and receive the gold-dust, in order that everything might be arranged for our departure for Singapore by the time that the vessel should be ready for sea.

I selected Palo Batublat, the northernmost of the group, as best adapted for our purpose, and we anchored on the east side, about three quarters of a mile from its shores. This island, which is separated from the main land by a navigable channel nearly two miles wide, is composed of two round hills, two hundred and fifty feet high, between which a small stream of clear water trickles down and falls into a natural basin in the granite rock near the beach. The island is covered with tall trees, but is free from under-wood.

We found the red soil routed up in many places apparently by pigs, which induced me, while the boat was watering, to walk up the hill, accompanied by several of the boat's crew, armed with spears, in the hope of falling in with some of these gentry. We had not advanced fifty yards



before we disturbed a sow and a litter of pigs; the former was forthwith brought down by a shot, and two of the piglings speared by the men. We also bagged a large boar, who was probably an eccentric character, for he had established himself in a nook formed by the branching out of a red-wood tree, which sloped sufficiently to allow him to ascend and descend with facility. His nest, which he had apparently occupied for years, was very comfortable, but it cost him his life; for had he been contented with a bed on the ground, he might have escaped with ease.

Should any vessel, passing near the coast, be in want of water, there is no place in these seas where it could be procured with greater facility, for a ship may anchor with safety within musket shot of the watering place. The island is uninhabited, and therefore no refreshments can be procured except wild pigs and fish. The Malays were not aware that water was to be found on the island, but I was induced to visit it from having remarked that it was composed of two hills, and I have invariably found throughout the Archipelago that a stream or spring of water will be met with between hills which have a granite substratum.

On the evening of the 30th of April we left the



island to return to Sinkawan, and about two hours after dark we discovered a large prahu close to us. I hailed her, but no answer was returned, and her sails, by which alone we had distinguished her, were lowered down ; although her conduct was suspicious, I refrained from firing into her, as she might have been a trader which had mistaken me for a Dutch cruiser.

We anchored off Sinkawan at four o'clock in the morning, and I learned from the Kung Se that the Resident of Sambas, with his entire fleet, had visited the town during my absence, and had expressed himself highly dissatisfied with my having visited Montradok. I was sorry that my journey to that place had given him uneasiness, but the Chinese territory being a free state, the Dutch having totally failed in the attempt to establish their authority there, I did not think it at all necessary to ask his permission.

The entire quantity of the gold-dust had not yet been furnished to my people, and I was obliged eventually to depart without a portion, worth £100, which the Kung Se did not appear inclined to pay. It is a pity that these functionaries did not act up to the views of the governor, who evidently wished to afford every encouragement to the trade.



On the 4th of May we departed for Singapore, and while standing out from the anchorage, the seaman who was loosing the gaff topsail reported that three men, in a small canoe, some distance to leeward, were making signals, by waving their handkerchiefs. We bore down and took them on board, when we found that they were Chinese, part of the crew of the Sampan puckat, which had been seized by the Resident of Sambas, who begged hard for a passage to Singapore in the schooner. They informed me that fourteen others, who had escaped into the jungle when their vessel was taken, had left Songy Ryah the same morning, to ask to be received on board ; and as I wished to do all I could for these poor people, we stood to the southward and picked them all up.

After a tedious passage across the China Sea we arrived at Singapore on the 15th of May.

This expedition, in a pecuniary point of view, was decidedly successful ; but instead of establishing an uninterrupted intercourse between Singapore and western Borneo, many circumstances which occurred during my stay on the coast, proved that nothing of the kind could be carried on with credit to the parties engaged in it, in consequence of the jealousy of the Dutch authorities.



In the foregoing chapters I have not mentioned the numerous insults and annoyances to which I was subjected, as it has been my wish to avoid the intrusion of that portion of my own personal adventures disconnected with general information concerning the country, and I only allude to them now with a view to point out to those who are interested in commercial affairs, the obstacles which exist, and which will go far to prevent the possibility of trading to this part of Borneo. These annoyances were so great, that I was on the point of putting about and returning to Singapore, soon after our entrance into the Sambas river, and was only prevented from taking this course by the enormous loss it would cause to those who had entrusted me with their property. From the period of my entering the river to my arrival at Sambas, the schooner was constantly watched either by the Resident himself, or by the people of his cruise prahus, and about a fortnight after her arrival at the town she was searched by the Resident in person, (certainly with many apologies,) for the purpose of satisfying the insulting suspicions of the Malay farmers of opium. I was the more annoyed at this circumstance from its having been my wish from the first, that a custom-house officer



should be sent on board the vessel, which would have relieved us from the system of espionage rendered the more disagreeable by the attempts made to conceal it.

The visit of the Resident to Sinkawan during my absence at the Lamukatan Islands, was evidently made with no good intent, and he probably repented having given me permission to return to that place. The remarkable indecision displayed by this gentleman might have ruined the enterprise, but as it happened, it tended rather to produce a contrary effect. I believe that he was not personally inimical to my interests, but that when he appeared to be opposed to them, he acted either at the instigation of others, or from a dread of incurring the disapprobation of the Supreme government.

Under the above circumstances it is not to be expected that any future attempt would be made to renew the intercourse, and up to the last accounts from Singapore, no English vessel from that place had since visited the western coast of Borneo.\*

\* Some months after my departure from the coast, I learned that the Arab opium farmers at Pontiana had sent a petition to the Batavian government, requesting that no intercourse might again be permitted with Sinkawan; on the receipt of which, orders had been sent to the Residences in Western Borneo to enforce the monopolies with greater strictness than before.



## CHAPTER X.

### SKETCH OF THE PRESENT STATE OF BORNEO, AND RECENT DISCOVERIES IN THE INTERIOR.

Serawak. — Antimony Mines. — North-west Coast. — Lanun Pirates. — Borneo Proper. — Dyak Tribes. — Commerce. — The North-east corner of Borneo. — Cochin Chinese Emigration. — Productions. — East Coast of Borneo. — Coti. — Expedition of the Dutch to explore the Coti River. — Mr. Dalton's Journey. — Dyaks. — Supply of Salt. — The Coti River. — Habits of the Orang-Badju. — Banjar Massin. — Inhabitants and Commerce. — South Coast, Cota Ringin. — Geological Formation of Borneo.

IN consequence of the extraordinary richness of its vegetable and mineral products, the island of Borneo, or, as it is called by the natives, Tanna Klemantan, presents a wide field for mercantile enterprise, and I have, therefore, been induced to offer the information which I was fortunately able to collect concerning various portions of this productive country, not mentioned in the foregoing chapters. It may be necessary to premise that, although not gathered from personal observation, full reliance may be placed on the authenticity of



the following details. The only general description of Borneo which has been published, consists of a "Sketch of the Island of Borneo," by Dr. Leyden, which appeared, I believe, in the Journal of the Batavian Society, for the year 1813; many changes, however, have taken place since that period. The Dutch have established themselves on the western coast, and many towns, which at their arrival were of some consequence, have either been reduced to insignificance or totally destroyed, while others have risen to importance, and Europeans having penetrated very far into the interior, the country has become better known.

The west coast of Borneo, from the mouth of the Sambas River to Point Datu, the N.W. extremity, with the exception of the Dyak town of Serawak, is very little known, even to the Malays. No extensive river has been found there, and as the Dyak tribes which inhabit the banks of the numerous creeks have not yet been tamed by communication with foreigners, and are always in want of human heads, the native traders have no inducement to visit these districts in the furtherance of their commercial pursuits.

The town of Serawak is situated in a bay to the eastward of Point Api, at the foot of a range of



mountains from one thousand five hundred to three thousand feet high, extending towards the interior of the island. The rapidity with which Serawak has risen to importance, proves how very little encouragement the natives require to induce them to turn the valuable productions of the island to account. Soon after the establishment of Singapore, some people from Borneo Proper, who had touched at Serawak to procure water, on their voyage to the settlement, brought with them a large lump of metal ore which they had picked up there. This, after puzzling the Chinese for some time, was stumbled upon by some English gentlemen, who discovered it to be antimony ore of a very superior quality. On learning that this commodity would be purchased at a good price by the merchants of Singapore, the Rajah of Borneo Proper sent a small party of his people to Serawak, and a friendly intercourse was soon established with the Dyaks, who brought down large quantities of the ore, which they exchanged for beads, red cloth, iron, &c. Soon afterwards, the Malay chiefs of Sambas, who were glad of an opportunity of carrying on a commerce free from the control of the Dutch, purchased two or three brigs and ships, which they employed in the trade, and in a



few years the annual importation of antimony ore at Singapore amounted to one thousand four hundred tons.

The ore, which is called, I believe, foliated antimony, is found either on, or immediately under, the surface of the ground, and is to be obtained with so much facility, that a hundred tons may be exchanged with the Dyaks for goods to the amount of little more than the same number of dollars. The ore is readily purchased at from sixteen to twenty dollars per ton, by the merchants of Singapore, who transmit it in its crude state to England. As the goods exported from Singapore are chiefly of a light description, the antimony ore proves very useful as ballast for ships; the freight to Europe is therefore very low, rarely exceeding thirty-five shillings per ton.\*

\* The Malays of Sambas are in the habit of painting flowers on their dresses with a preparation of antimony ore, which imparts to the cloth a bright and permanent steel colour. As the natives, though they prefer dark colours, are fond of giving their dresses as gay an appearance as possible, clothes thus adorned are much valued, but the labour of painting renders them too expensive for any but the rich. Antimony has never, I believe, been used in England for dyeing; its employment for this purpose by the Malays may therefore afford a hint to the merchants of Manchester and Glasgow, who export cotton goods to the Indian Archipelago.



The north-west coast from Point Datu to Borneo Proper, an extent of nearly three hundred miles, is scarcely known even to the native trader, although it is held to be as rich in natural productions as any other part of the island. The country is occupied by several powerful Dyak tribes, differing only in dialect, who here, as elsewhere, are engaged in perpetual warfare. The most adventurous of the tribes is that of Serassan, a spot about a hundred miles to the eastward of Serawak, the people of which are said by the Malays to be of a more lofty stature than the others, a statement which, I suspect, must be considered as meaning only that the tribe is more powerful. They sometimes make long voyages down the coast, and their murderous visit to Sambas has already been mentioned. Their canoes, which are large, and of superior build, are formed of a tree which grows to a great height without branches, and which much resembles the beech.

The Dyaks, however, are not the sole occupants of this part of the coast, for the Lanuns, a piratical people from the island of Magindano are established in several of the harbours, where they live chiefly in their prahus, which are from twenty to sixty tons burthen. During the south-east mon-



soon, a proportion of these vessels cruise in the more civilized parts of the Archipelago, chiefly near the entrances of the straits leading to Singapore, where they attack and plunder the prahus of the native traders, and when about to return to their haunts in Borneo, generally manage to surprise some small town or village, the entire population of which is often carried away into slavery.\*

During the absence of the fleets, the women and children remain on the coast of Borneo with the rest of the prahus, to take charge of the booty

\* In the month of August 1834, while stretching across to Borneo, on our voyage from Singapore to Java, we overtook a fleet of seven Lanun prahus which were standing in the same direction. As the people in the prahus appeared to be in the greatest confusion, while we passed through the fleet, we strongly suspected that they were pirates; but from the prahus of the people of Borneo Proper bearing a great resemblance to them, we could not be certain respecting the correctness of our suspicions. On our return to Singapore, we learned that a fleet of the same number of Lanun prahus had carried away the entire population of a small island, near the Straits of Rhio, a short time previous to our departure from Singapore, therefore there can be no doubt that we had fallen in with the identical vessels. When we overtook the fleet, the prahus, owing to the swell, were almost unmanageable, so that had we met them with hostile intent, every prahu might have been sunk with the greatest facility, and without any probability of loss on our side.



already collected ; and, as the females are nearly as warlike as the men, and understand the use of fire-arms, they are considered sufficiently powerful to beat off the Dyaks, from whom alone they are liable to molestation. The Dyaks and the Lanuns, indeed, occasionally join forces ; in which case the human heads and the iron procured in the cruise down the coast are claimed by the former, the remainder of the plunder being resigned to the Lanuns.

When a sufficient quantity of plunder and slaves have been collected by the Lanuns, they return to their own country, and their place is supplied by others, who settle for a time on the coast in order to enrich themselves by the same means.

The injury which the trade of Singapore sustains from this system must be obvious, and when our commerce in the Indian Archipelago shall be deemed of sufficient importance to attract attention, some exertions will probably be made to put a stop to the evil. The distance between Magindano and the straits of Malacca is so great, that the Lanuns would be unable to carry on their operations, had they not some depôt for plunder within a convenient distance of the latter, and



should their settlements on the coast of Borneo be destroyed; there is no other spot in the western part of the Archipelago which would afford them concealment. The Lanuns would, therefore, be obliged to turn their attention to other pursuits, or to confine their piracies to the vicinity of their own country. There, however, they would be liable to molestation from the Spaniards of the Philippine Islands; indeed, it is the vigilance of the Spanish cruisers which has driven them to seek for plunder near those places in which the native traders are unprotected.

As an act of justice to the peaceable portion of the natives of the Indian Archipelago, whom we have enticed to visit our settlement of Singapore, some exertions should be made towards the suppression of piracy, and by the expulsion of the Lanuns from the N.W. coast of Borneo, a considerable branch of this most nefarious system of warfare would be destroyed. A visit from one of the British men-of-war stationed in the straits of Malacca, and the expenditure of a few charges of powder and shot, would effect this desirable object, for the Lanuns, on finding that their depôts were liable to molestation, would speedily withdraw, as the necessity for their



prahus remaining for the protection of the settlements would prevent them from making cruises in search of plunder and slaves, which are their only objects. Were a ship of war to cruise off Point Datu, during the months of August and September, nine-tenths of the Lanuns might be cut off as they returned, gorged with blood and plunder, from the neighbourhood of the straits of Malacca. Borneo Proper, the only town of note on the N. W. coast of Borneo, was formerly the most important place in the island, but the commotions which occurred in the state some thirty years ago, and the consequent prevalence of piracy, in a great measure destroyed the commerce, by deterring Europeans from holding intercourse with the inhabitants, and by frightening away the Chinese settlers.

From that period Borneo Proper has been totally neglected by the British. In the year 1834, soon after my return from the west coast of the island, an enterprising Armenian merchant of Singapore despatched a ship there for the purpose of opening a trade, and the commander, an Englishman, and an Armenian gentleman on board, were well received by the Raja, who appeared highly desirous of establishing a commercial intercourse.



with the British settlement. The ship returned to Singapore with a valuable cargo of pepper, camphor, gold-dust, and diamonds. Several vessels, chiefly despatched by the Armenians, have since visited Borneo Proper, and the trade appears to be established on a secure footing, since the premium of insurance from Singapore amounts only to one and a quarter per cent. the same as that to Java and China, and less than that to Manilla.

The town of Borneo Proper is situated on the banks of a river of considerable size, which, however, is much inferior to that of Sambas and Pontianak. The town differs little in appearance from those of the Malays, and the government is of the same description. The inhabitants, who are darker in complexion, and more powerful than the Malays, bear a great resemblance to the natives of Magindano, probably from their being of the same race, apparently a mixture of the Mogul and Philippine breeds. Their domestic manners are characterized by much good feeling, but the Chinese assert, no doubt on sufficient grounds, that the Borneans, as far as *they* are concerned, make very little distinction between their neighbours' goods and their own, being much



addicted to petty pilfering. I have witnessed several disturbances in the streets of Singapore, between them and the Chinese, from the above cause, which have always terminated by the Bornean giving up the article he has purloined, generally some toy or trinket of small value which he wished to obtain for his children, without sacrificing any of his worldly wealth.

There are several Dyak tribes in the country behind Borneo Proper, which are nominally under the control of the Raja of the latter place, who is enabled to reduce an unruly Dyak chief to obedience simply by stopping the supply of salt, which can be obtained only from the sea-coast. So essentially necessary is this article to the very existence of a Dyak, that a chief who wishes to assert his independence is soon forced by his own subjects to acknowledge the authority of the Raja. Their alliance with the latter does not prevent the chiefs from engaging in constant warfare with each other, and the people of Borneo Proper care not whose heads they obtain, if their own are untouched. One of the Armenian gentlemen before mentioned, who has given a short account of Borneo Proper in the *Singapore Chronicle*, visited a Dyak village a short distance above



the town, and describes the house of the chief as being a perfect Golgotha, decorated with at least five hundred human skulls, which had descended from father to son for many generations, each having added his share to the hoard. Rice and pork are their chief food, to which wild animals and birds, brought down by their blow-pipes, are sometimes added. They appear to be far less cleanly in their mode of life than the Dyaks on the west coast of the island, as the pigs are described as enjoying a share of the dwelling, and sometimes quarrelling with their owners for a portion of their meals. The men indulge in periodical drinking bouts, at which they invariably become intoxicated. On these occasions, they drink large quantities of a fermented liquor made from rice, but in what manner I have been unable to learn. The Dyaks near Sambas have, in a great measure, abandoned this habit, but those farther in the interior are still addicted to it. When at the latter place I was equally unsuccessful in all my attempts to discover the mode of its preparation.

An extensive commerce was formerly carried on between Borneo Proper and China, and several large junks annually visited the town, but the



same causes which occasioned the cessation of the European trade, operated very injuriously on that of the Chinese. A considerable body of the latter are still settled in the country, who are chiefly employed in the cultivation of pepper. Their numbers, however, are very small when compared with the thousands who formerly resided there. Extensive tracts of land were cultivated in those days, and numerous shipwrights were employed in building large junks with the fine timber which abounds on the banks of the river. These vessels were generally sold in China, where they often realized a profit of one hundred per cent.

Should the commercial intercourse which is now opened with Singapore, be continued, Borneo Proper must again become a place of importance. A visit from a British man-of-war to this, as well as to many other native ports, would be highly beneficial to the newly opened traffic, which affords a fair prospect of a large consumption of our manufactures. The visit would be esteemed by the Raja as a mark of attention, and he would treat the British traders with more consideration on perceiving that their welfare was an object of interest to their government.



The Raja of Borneo Proper claims all the coast of the island between Kemanis river, forty miles north-east of the town, to Point Api, near the north-west extremity of the island. I cannot discover on what grounds he establishes his claim, certainly not by right of conquest, as the country around the town, and the Dyak town of Serawak, are the only parts under his control.

The north-east corner of Borneo is held to be superior in soil and climate, and equal in mineral productions, to any other known parts of the island. The country, which is clothed in some parts by forests of lofty trees, and in others opens out into extensive plains, apparently similar to that of Montradok, is well watered by numerous rivers. About forty miles inland, there is a high mountain called Kiniballu, at the foot of which a large *danau*, or fresh water lake, of the same name, occurs, considerably elevated above the level of the sea; and the Dyaks assert that others of the same description extend towards the interior of the island.

The north-east end of Borneo was ceded to the British by the Sulus many years ago, and a settlement was formed by the East-India Company on Balambangan, an island near the coast, in 1774; but the settlers were soon afterwards driven



out by a party of Salus, who had been employed in constructing buildings. It is much to be regretted that the British establishment was not sufficiently powerful to resist so contemptible a force; for, from the extreme richness of the products of the north-east end of Borneo, and from its favourable position in a commercial point of view, the settlement, had it been continued, must by this time have become of great importance. The Dyaks of this part of the country, though delighting in human sacrifice like the other tribes, are farther advanced in civilization, and many visited Balambangan in their canoes to trade with the British, during the short period in which it was occupied by them.

The north-east end of Borneo has not, I believe, been visited by a British vessel since the abandonment of Balambangan, but, according to the accounts of the Bugis traders who sometimes touch there, a very interesting change has lately taken place. They assert, that large bodies of Cochin Chinese are now established on the shores of Malludo Bay and the adjacent parts; and as the Cochin Chinese are known to be settled in considerable numbers on the neighbouring island of Palawan, there appears to be no reason for



doubting the correctness of their information. This part of the coast is so situated with respect to the monsoons, that voyages to and from Cochin China may be made with the greatest facility at all times of the year; and in addition to this favourable circumstance, the number of navigable rivers and well-sheltered harbours, the fertility of the soil, and the absence of all likelihood of opposition on the part of the Dyaks, would render the spot better adapted for Cochin Chinese colonization than any other in the Indian Archipelago. This will be a most fortunate circumstance for the Dyaks, as no people in Eastern Asia would be more likely to improve their condition, by example, at least, than the industrious and light-hearted Cochin Chinese.

Emigration from Cochin China has of late years prevailed to a vast extent, and as colonization by these people cannot fail to exercise a powerful influence over the future political and moral state of Borneo, as well as that of many other countries in the Indian Archipelago, a few words on the subject may not be deemed irrelevant.

The kingdom of Cochin China, to which is added a portion of Cambodia, is under the rule of a despotic, and a decidedly anti-commercial



prince, who forbids his subjects to carry their produce to other countries, under pain of death. The people, however, particularly those of the south-western parts of the kingdom, which are nearest to Singapore, have become too well acquainted with the advantages to be derived from foreign commerce, to submit without a struggle to such injurious restrictions. The people of Saigon (the second town of importance in the kingdom), and of the adjacent country, have been for several years, and still continue to be, in a state of rebellion ; and as the war which is carried on between them and the king's forces desolates the country, many of the inhabitants, even those who join neither party, but who suffer equally from both, annually emigrate to some other country, in which the barbarizing influence of a despotic prince, and an oppressive aristocracy, will not be exerted in keeping them in a state of ignorance and bloodshed. Religious persecution has also had some effect in compelling the Cochin Chinese to leave their oppressed and devastated country. The Jesuits of the Propaganda mission, who had been established in Cochin China for many years, were, about the year 1832, detected in treasonable practices against the state, the numbers and devo-



tion of their converts having led them to form a plan by which they hoped to take possession of the country, and to be enabled to convert the remainder of the population by force. Two of the Jesuits were taken and beheaded, and the remainder were expelled the country. Many of the converts then rebelled, but were put down by the king's forces, on which the greater proportion of those who escaped the sword, emigrated to foreign parts, those in the interior of the country settling themselves in Siam, and those near the sea-coast crossing the China sea; but in what place they have fixed themselves, whether on Borneo or on the Philippine islands, remains undecided, and will long continue so, unless the British open their eyes, and cease to regard these most important countries with the unaccountable indifference which they have hitherto displayed towards them.

The natural productions of the north-east end of Borneo, which Dalrymple, from the salubrity of the climate, appropriately calls "Felicia," are of the same description as those of the other known parts of the island. Gold and diamonds are to be obtained with very little labour, and as tin ore is sometimes picked up on the surface of the soil,



veins of this valuable metal, which often yields a profit to the miner even greater than that on gold, no doubt exist there also. In addition to the animals which are found in the western part of Borneo, the plains are covered with herds of large cattle, the descendants of a small stock that were left there by the Spaniards about two centuries ago, which have probably spread themselves over the interior of the island, (where the country is generally more open than on the coast,) since considerable numbers are to be met with on the plains near Borneo Proper. Some of these animals are domesticated by the Dyaks, who drink their milk, but, as they prefer the flesh of pigs, do not generally slaughter them for food. Jerked beef has now become an article of traffic, and American vessels visit Madagascar and the south-west coast of Africa, for the sole purpose of purchasing cattle, and curing their flesh for exportation; and as the stock in these places must soon become sufficiently reduced to occasion a great advance in the price, Borneo may, ere long, be visited for the like purpose.\*

\* The Mindoro sea, which is bounded on the south-west side by the north-east coast of Borneo, is much resorted to by British sperm whalers. I have met with several which have obtained entire cargoes there.



Of the east coast of Borneo, from Malludo Bay to the Coti River, (which is supposed to be the largest in the island,) little further is known than that it contains many rivers of considerable size, the mouths of which are occupied by foreigners, Bugis of Celebes, or the natives of Sulu, who keep the Dyak tribes in their neighbourhood in subjection. The products of the country, gold, diamonds, bees'-wax, &c., are taken to the Sulu islands, or to Coti. Those exported to the former are sold chiefly to the Spaniards of Samboangan and Manilla, and those to Coti generally find their way to Singapore.

The Bugis town of Coti or Semerinden, is the most important place on the east coast of Borneo. The inhabitants are chiefly Bugis of Waju, on the opposite coast of Celebes, and they are equally commercial in their habits with the other natives of that island. Many of their prahus annually visit Singapore with the produce of Borneo, which they exchange for European and Indian manufactures, partly for their own consumption, and partly for exportation to the more eastern parts of the Archipelago.

In the year 1825, an expedition was sent from Batavia by the Dutch government to explore the



Coti river, and to traverse the island to the opposite coast. The party thus employed met with the fate which must inevitably befall exploring expeditions sent by the Dutch into the countries not immediately under their subjection, and in which the fame of their deeds has arrived before them. Major Müller, a gentleman who had been employed in the like capacity on the opposite coast, was placed at the head of the expedition, the remainder of the party consisting of twenty-four Javanese soldiers,—a sufficient number to excite suspicion on the part of the Bugis, but inadequate to afford protection in the event of an attack. On arriving at Coti, Major Müller made an arrangement with the Sultan, by which the latter agreed to permit the Dutch to settle there, and monopolize the commerce, for the annual payment into the Sultan's treasury of eighty thousand guilders. When this compact came to the knowledge of the Pangerans, they remonstrated so strongly with the Sultan, that he regretted having made the agreement; and to prevent its being acted upon, determined to cause M. Müller and his party to be destroyed, as no evidence of the fact would then remain. One of the Bugis Pangerans was therefore sent with the party as a guide, who, with



the assistance of the Dyak boatmen, treacherously murdered the greater number, a few of the Javanese alone being spared.

Two years after this occurrence, Mr. Dalton, an Englishman, arrived at Coti in a Bugis prahu from Singapore, on a trading speculation ; and he penetrated some distance into the interior, where he remained among the Dyaks about fifteen months. During this period he resided chiefly at Tongarron, the capital of the most powerful Dyak chief, who adopted him as a brother, by means of a ceremony in use among all the Dyak tribes, in which each party drinks a small portion of the blood of the other, mixed in a cup of water. Ties of this description are more sacred than those of consanguinity, a very fortunate circumstance for those Europeans who may visit the country, since the chiefs show the greatest readiness in forming these bonds of brotherhood, and will afterwards protect their *sabat* at the risk of their own lives.

Mr. Dalton did not long survive his return to Singapore, and the notes he has left (some of which have been published in the Singapore Chronicle) are rather deficient in geographical information, but contain much interesting matter regarding the Dyaks, who do not appear to differ



much in their customs from those of the western coast. They are generally slightly built and well formed, and allow their long black hair to fall loose down the back. Their weapons consist of the blow-pipe, swords, and long targets covered with hides, and they also wear defensive armour made of the skins of beasts, on which a large shell is sometimes placed so as to cover the navel. The system of head-hunting prevails to an incredible extent, but the population of the Coti river and its tributaries is nevertheless said to amount to 270,000, who are under the rule of three head chiefs. This, however, may be an exaggeration, as the chiefs would doubtless endeavour to enhance their own reputation by making their subjects appear to be as numerous as possible. These tribes are nominally under the control of the Bugis of Coti, who are enabled to keep them in awe in consequence of the dread which the Dyaks entertain of fire-arms, and also from the latter being dependant on the Bugis for the supply of salt. On one occasion the chief of Tongarron went to war with the Bugis, but he was soon obliged to sue for peace, for the Dyaks of the interior, hearing that it was through his means that the supply of salt had been cut off, joined in a body, and,



driving the chief from his dominions, obliged him to seek protection from the Bugis themselves.

The great desire manifested by the Dyaks to obtain this article, which to them appears to be the grand luxury of life, might be rendered a powerful engine in the work of civilization. Were a single settlement on the coast to be formed by a people who, disdaining the narrow-minded policy of the Mahomedans and the Dutch, would despatch liberal supplies of salt into the interior, free from those exorbitant duties which render it so difficult to purchase, the commodity so much prized would pass from hand to hand even to the innermost recesses of the island; the people belonging to the various tribes would be brought into communication with each other, the necessity of providing for their mutual safety would produce mutual compacts, and in their peaceful trading, they would learn to look upon their neighbours without any sinister design upon their heads. The commerce thus established would soon create a demand for other foreign articles; and the love of finery natural to the Dyaks would induce them to collect the valuable productions of their country, in order that they might be enabled to obtain them; while the system of human sacrifice, which



I believe to be chiefly the fruit of idleness, would soon disappear. I entertain great expectations from the Cochin Chinese settlement on the north-east coast, particularly should some fortunate accident point out to them the way to Singapore, of the existence of which place, in all probability, they are not yet aware.

A British Government vessel *may* probably be despatched to find them out, but this circumstance must rather be desired than expected, since no exertions whatsoever have been hitherto made to extend our acquaintance with the Archipelago. I do not believe that this neglect has arisen from apathy, it is more probably owing to the want of information concerning regions remote from the beaten track, no one during the course of many years having attempted to direct public attention to this part of the world. It may, I fear, be thought that I harp too much upon one string, and that the improvement of the condition of the natives of these beautiful islands engrosses too much of my time and thoughts : but it is a subject which I have deeply at heart, and, convinced as I am that the British nation, without expense, and with very little trouble, could confer inestimable benefits upon multitudes of deserving beings, I consider it



to be my duty to point out the way, and to leave nothing untried which may assist in the accomplishment of so desirable an object.

The mouth of the Coti river is fronted by numerous islands, so that it may be said to have many entrances, but that generally preferred by the prahus is in lat.  $1^{\circ} 10' S.$ ; long.  $117^{\circ} E.$  From the direction of the reaches of the river, and from the estimated distance from the coast, Mr. Dalton supposes Semerinden, the Bugis town, to be in lat.  $1^{\circ} 4' N.$ ; long.  $116^{\circ} 2' E.$ ; and Tongarron, the capital, in lat.  $1^{\circ} 30' N.$ ; long.  $115^{\circ} 6' E.$  In my own sketch I have reduced the distance at which the above calculation would place these towns from the coast, one-third, for I have generally found distances to be over estimated when the length of a reach has been calculated merely by guess. From Tongarron the river runs north twenty miles, N.W. twenty miles, then west and W.S.W. Marpow, a large Dyak town, is situated about four hundred miles farther up the river; its course must therefore be very tortuous. It is said that a fast canoe, aided by the current, which sometimes runs at the rate of six miles an hour, can descend from Marpow to Tongarron in twenty hours. No mention is made of any continuous



ranges of mountains, but from the force of the stream, and from the length of the river, it must have its source some thousand feet above the level of the sea.

To the southward of Coti there is another large river, on the banks of which, about sixty miles from the mouth, the town of Passir is situated. This place was formerly of some importance, a considerable trade being carried on with the Spice Islands, but the dissolute habits, and the extortions of the chiefs, have reduced it to a den of infamy and piracy. In the year 1772, the British proposed to establish a factory here, but were deterred by some commotions which took place in the state.

At the mouths of most of the rivers on the east coast of Borneo, and also on the north and north-east coasts, are found the Orang Badju, a kind of sea-gipsies, whom I have mentioned when treating of the island of Banca. They dwell in boats of eight or ten tons burthen, which are covered, when in harbour, with a roof of matting. Each boat contains about fifteen inhabitants, men, women, and children, who employ themselves chiefly in catching and curing fish and trepang, and in making salt from sea-weed. The latter



they dispose of to the Dyaks. The women are equally skilful with the men, both in fishing and in the management of the boats. During the south-east monsoon, when the weather is fine in the southern parts of the island, they cruize about Passir and Pulo Laut; but when the monsoon changes, and the weather becomes tempestuous, they sail to the northern parts of the island, which at that season are distinguished for their freedom from storms or other annoyances.

Many of the Badjus remain throughout the year near the Dutch settlement of Macassar, on the south end of Celebes, where they are found very useful in carrying despatches. They are chiefly employed by the Chinese in fishing for trepang, or sea-slug, and according to the policy invariably adopted by the latter in their dealings with the natives, are generally involved in debt, from which extrication is nearly hopeless. The demand against each boat or family usually averages about four hundred guilders (twenty-five pounds sterling); and, extraordinary as it may appear, no instance is on record of their ever having absconded to avoid the payment of their debts.\*

\* Had not circumstances called me to England in the early part of 1835, I should have visited the Arru Islands, and the



The Orang Badju bear a strong resemblance in every particular to the Malay boatmen of Singapore, whence it is supposed that they are derived from the same origin. They generally profess the Mahomedan religion, but are far from being rigid in their tenets.

The whole of the south coast of Borneo, is, I believe, claimed by the Dutch, but the greater portion is almost totally unknown to them, and they have only settled at Banjar Massin, a town on the banks of the largest river yet discovered on the southern coast, the mouth of which is about ninety miles from the S.W. extremity of the island. Banjar Massin was colonized by the Javanese many years before the arrival of Europeans in the Archipelago, but there has since been so great an influx of Bugis and other foreign settlers, that the inhabitants have nearly lost all resemblance to the people of Java. A large tribe

north coast of Australia, in which case I should in all probability have taken several Badju boats and their entire crews with me, for the purpose of procuring trepang and tortoise-shell. In engaging these people it will be necessary to pay off their debts, and, free from this incumbrance, they will readily proceed to any part of the Archipelago. Whenever the north-west coast of Australia shall be colonized by Europeans, the settlement will find in the Badjus an industrious maritime population, whose labours cannot fail to prove of the utmost importance.



of Dyaks occupy the banks of the river some distance above the town, and although these people have held a greater degree of communication with Europeans than any of the other aboriginal tribes on the island, they have not totally abandoned the practice of man-hunting, no attempt having in all probability been made to dissuade them from it. They do not, however, decorate their houses with skulls, but are supposed to keep them concealed, and are evidently ashamed of being supposed to possess them, for when any allusion is made to the subject by an European, they become greatly confused, and endeavour to turn the discourse into another channel.

Banjar Massin was formerly much frequented both by the British and the Dutch, and in the year 1747 a factory was established by the latter, which was continued until 1809, when, as the revenue did not exceed the expenditure, it was abandoned, the Sultan paying fifty thousand rix-dollars to the Dutch for the forts and government buildings. The following year an embassy from the Sultan visited Malacca for the purpose of inviting the British to settle at Banjar Massin, and when Java was taken possession of by our troops in 1811, a factory was established there, which was



delivered over to the Dutch on the restoration of Java, and is continued by them until the present day.

The chief exports of Banjar Massin are gold, diamonds, and pepper. On the banks of the river, rattans of the best description are found in abundance, and are exported in large quantities to Java. There has been some commerce lately carried on with Singapore, but it is much discouraged by the Dutch authorities.

The coast between Banjar Massin and Point Sambar, the south-west extremity of Borneo, is understood to possess no large rivers, but several towns exist there, inhabited chiefly by Bugis, which are fast rising to importance, the freedom of commerce enjoyed at Singapore having given a spur to the trade of these places, and indeed to that of all the native ports in the western part of the Archipelago, that is to say, of all those in which a rival European influence has not been exerted in opposition. Cota Ringin, a Bugis settlement one hundred miles to the eastward of Point Sambar, has become the emporium of this part of the south coast, and about thirty prahus belonging to the inhabitants annually visit Singapore. Cota Ringin is totally unknown to us, except by report,



for no British vessel has ever touched there. The inhabitants are under some alarm lest the Dutch should endeavour to establish themselves among them ; but I think that such an event is not likely to occur, the Dutch force in India being insufficient to maintain the settlements which they already possess. They may, however, easily destroy its commerce by blockading the port, as at Sinkawan.

I have now completed my tour of Borneo, and trust that my account will suffice to point out its importance, and that some exertions may be made to acquire a more extensive acquaintance with this interesting island. I have passed over many of the minor ports, not because I consider them to be unimportant, but from my desire to compress the present details into as small a space as possible. There is scarcely a river or creek on the south and the east coasts of the island which is not occupied by a settlement of Bugis. In the year 1834 more than one hundred Bugis prahus, estimated at three thousand tons, arrived at Singapore from these ports, all of them bringing cargoes of considerable value.

In the maps of the island of Borneo, a range of lofty mountains is represented as traversing the



interior from the north-east to the south-west. I have never seen them, neither have I been able to discover any evidence which may tend to prove their existence; indeed I feel confident that no ranges of the immense altitude which these are represented to possess, will be found in this, or in any other part of the island.

With the exception of the mountains in Java, and the islands stretching from it to the eastward, which are of volcanic origin, all the ranges which have yet been discovered in the Archipelago, and in the intertropical parts of eastern Asia, extend from north-west to south-east. One of these, after extending along the west and south-west coasts of Sumatra, terminates at the south-eastern extremity of that island. Another, running along the Malay peninsula, is lost for a time, but appears again in the high peak of Lingin, and terminates in Banca and Billiton. A branch from this range separates at Pulo Timoan, on the east coast of the Malay peninsula, and ends at Carimata, in the strait between Borneo and Billiton. Two ranges traverse Cambodia and Cochin China in the same direction, and these will, I think, be found to terminate in Borneo, as all the hills in the latter which I have seen are inclined the same way, and



are of the same formation (granite). The mountains at Serawak, the north-west point of Borneo, are apparently a continuation of the Cambodian chain, between which the Natunas islands and Pulo Condor form the connecting link, and the range is probably continued by isolated hills until it terminates in the Gunung Ratos, or the Hundred Mountains, at the south-eastern extremity of the island. I say *isolated* hills, because it would appear that the large rivers which must have their sources in the very centre of the island, do not take their rise in mountains. I was at Sambas, which is one of the most extensive of these rivers, at the end of what is called the rainy season; but indeed the west coast of Borneo has no decided rainy season, for showers fall at intervals all the year round. At this period, when the rivers of all the adjacent countries, which possess mountains, are flooded, no alteration could be perceived in the Sambas river, for it rose no higher then than at any other period of the year. Were the river to take its rise in a chain of mountains, the freshes would have been very strong. From the strength of the streams, it is, nevertheless, evident that these rivers have their sources two or three thousand feet above the level of the sea.



As geographical research is now extending to every part of the globe, the interior of Borneo may not be entirely neglected. The numerous large rivers afford easy communication with the innermost recesses of the country, and, unlike the Quorra and other extensive rivers in Africa, they rarely have either sandbanks or rapids to arrest the progress of the voyager.



## CHAPTER XI.

### SINGAPORE.

Singapore.—The Town and Country.—The Institution.—Soil and Climate. — Sumatras. — European Residents. — Amusements.—Native Population. — Campong Glam.—Malacca-born Chinese.—Arrival of the Junks from China.—Landing of the Emigrants.—Secret Societies.—Attack of a Band of Robbers on the Dobies Campong.—Prevalence of Crime.

Soon after my return to Singapore from Borneo I made a voyage up the Straits of Malacca, and afterwards revisited Java, returning to England in 1835. Java has already been described, and the British settlements of Malacca and Penang have been noticed by other writers, and my object not being to make a book, but merely to register the information which circumstances have enabled me to collect, concerning countries very little known, I will here drop my personal narrative, and devote the concluding chapters to a description of Singapore, which has now become intimately connected with the moral and political state of the Archi-



pelago at large. So important a subject deserves many more pages than it is in my power to devote to it, and I must content myself with an endeavour to embody the facts which I gathered, either from personal observation or from the best authorities, during a residence of nine months in the settlement, together with several visits of shorter duration, as clearly and succinctly as my very limited literary experience will admit.\*

\* It is incumbent on me in this place to acknowledge the obligations which I am under to my worthy friend Dr. Almeida, not only on account of his unremitting attentions during my stay, but also for the opportunities afforded me through his instrumentality, of gaining some degree of information concerning the far distant countries of the Archipelago, which, though not made available to any extent in the present work, have tended to excite a curiosity which I trust ere long to gratify. Although the mercantile transactions carried on by this gentleman were too extensive to permit him to devote much time to medical practice, yet they did not prevent him from employing the experience which he had acquired during several years' service as a surgeon in the Portuguese navy, in alleviating the sufferings of his fellow-creatures, engaging in this work of charity without any other reward than the gratification afforded by the consciousness of having performed a good action. Scarcely a native chief, or nakodah, visits the settlement without at least once paying his respects to Dr. Almeida, and thus I was enabled to collect much useful information concerning the countries which they visited during their commercial voyages, for they could not withhold it from one whom they found domesticated with an individual who had proved himself to be their sincere friend and benefactor.



Singapore is situated on an island at the south-east extremity of the Malay peninsula, near the narrowest part of the strait which affords communication between the China Sea and the Bay of Bengal. Equidistant from Calcutta and Canton, the most important commercial cities in eastern and western Asia, voyages to each can be made with equal facility, and, in addition to an extensive commerce carried on by Europeans, the native traders, encouraged by the perfect freedom from duties enjoyed there, flock from all parts of the East, while the manufactures of Hindustan are there exchanged for the rich productions of the Indian Archipelago. Ships from all parts of the world are constantly arriving, and a vessel which has crossed the Pacific from the west coast of America, may meet in the harbour with another from the east side of the same continent, which has sailed round the Cape of Good Hope. The port is visited by vessels of all nations, and the flags of Great Britain, Holland, France, and America, may often be seen intermingled with the streamers of the Chinese junks, and the fanciful colours of the native prahus.

Extraordinary as it may appear, this rapidly improving settlement, which now imports British



manufactures to the annual amount of several hundred thousand pounds, was established without the concurrence, indeed, with the decided disapprobation of the Home government. When Java and its dependencies were, after the peace of 1814, delivered over by the British to their former possessors, the Dutch, the first act of the latter, with the proverbial ingratitude of a ruling power, was to impose restrictions on British commerce in the Archipelago. They were enabled to effect this object from the position of their settlements, those in the Straits of Malacca and Sunda commanding all the western entrances to the China and Java-seas, and it therefore became evident that, without some effort to destroy their monopolies, there would soon be an end to the importation of British manufactures into the Eastern islands. This consideration induced Sir Stamford Raffles (then governor of Bencoolen) to represent the case so strongly to the Supreme Government at Bengal, that the Governor General permitted him to make a settlement near the south-east entrance of the Straits of Malacca, and he accordingly proceeded there in 1819; and Singapore, then only a small village, inhabited by fishermen, was selected for the site of the future city. As might be expected,



the establishment was strenuously opposed by the Dutch, who remonstrated so strongly with the British Government, that the latter declined having anything to do with it, throwing the whole responsibility on Sir Stamford Raffles ; and it was not until it had been established for three years, in the last of which the trade was estimated at several millions of dollars, that Singapore was recognized by Great Britain.

The island of Singapore, on the south side of which the town is situated, is about sixty miles in circumference, a narrow strait dividing it from the Malay peninsula. This strait is navigable for ships, and was generally frequented by the old European mariners. The case is now, however, different, no square-rigged vessel having passed through it for many years. The land on which the town is built is very low, being only a few feet above high water mark ; but the face of the island generally is gently undulating, and covered with dense forest ; the only hill of considerable elevation being Bukit Tima (Tin Hill), an isolated barren mount near the north coast, probably one thousand five hundred feet in height.

The commercial portion of the town is on the west side of the river's entrance, the part nearest



to the sea being occupied by the European merchants. A range of houses, fronted by wharfs, extends along the bank as far as the bridge, a distance of about three hundred yards, the principal streets running at right angles with the river. With the exception of the commercial square, these streets are occupied exclusively by Chinese, Klings, and other natives, who are chiefly merchants or shopkeepers.

The houses, which have only one upper story, are fronted by wide piazzas, which screen the passengers from the rays of the sun, and shelter the goods exposed for sale by the native occupants. The houses in the principal streets are built of brick, but those in the outskirts of the town are composed of wood and thatch. The former are plastered with mortar of such an excellent quality, that it retains its smoothness and whiteness for a long time, and gives the streets a light and handsome appearance. Many of the dwellings recently erected by some of the European merchants are very fine buildings, and are not excelled by any in Eastern India.

On the opposite side of the river, a smooth road runs along the shores of the harbour to Campong Glam, a village a mile and a half from Singapore,



occupied by about four thousand Chinese, Bugis, and Malays. From this, the road strikes a short distance into the country, and returns with a sweep to the town. On the road side, fronting the sea, are the villas of the principal Europeans (few of whom reside in the town), large and handsome buildings, fronted by green verandahs and venetian blinds. The Circular road forms the evening drive of the inhabitants; but it is not available for those who dwell in the town, as the wooden bridge has become so ruinous that, to prevent accidents, it has been reduced so greatly in width that it can only be crossed by foot passengers.

The town can boast of no Government buildings of any importance, with the exception of the jail, a square white building erected in a swamp at the back of the town, and a small stone hospital, situated near the Circular-road. The court-house was constructed for a dwelling by an English merchant, from whom it is rented by the Government.

The Government-house, the residence of the chief functionary in the settlement, is erected on the top of a hill at the back of the town, from which there is a fine prospect of the straits and



the neighbouring islands. As this building was completed within a fortnight after the first arrival of the British, it is not to be expected that it can be very substantial. The sides are composed of rough poles, the interstices being filled up by boards and venetian windows, and the roof is covered with attops, or reed thatch, in the intricacies of which crickets, lizards, and all sorts of creeping things, sport unmolested. It is withal so unsubstantial, that after a Sumatra squall has passed over the town, inquiring glances are cast up by the inhabitants, to discover whether the house still remains in *statu quo*, or has disappeared from the top of the hill, and taken refuge from the storm in the valley on the opposite side. At the foot of the hill lies the botanical garden, which is now overrun with weeds, though several nutmeg-trees, planted by the founder of the settlement, flourish and bear fruit without any care or cultivation.

In the centre of the *marina*, close to the sea-shore, are the ruins of a large building called the Singapore Institution, and being an object which generally catches the eye of a stranger on entering the harbour, many are inclined to doubt that the settlement can be so young as it is represented. This edifice was founded by Sir Stamford Raffles



soon after the establishment of the British on the island, in the fond hope that, by means of natives educated therein by European teachers, whom it was proposed to appoint, knowledge and civilization might be widely disseminated throughout the Further East. The building was nearly completed on his final departure from India, and negotiations were in train for embodying with it the members of the Chinese College of Malacca, but when the master-mind was gone, the institution and its objects were neglected, and the building fell into decay. Subscriptions to a considerable amount were raised by the merchants for its completion and support, but these were found to be insufficient for the purpose.

During my stay at Singapore, it was proposed to erect a monument to Sir Stamford Raffles with the remainder of the funds, but nothing has yet been decided on. No tribute to the memory of that friend of the human race could be more appropriate than the completion of the Singapore Institution ; but it is scarcely to be expected that this can be achieved by a handful of British merchants alone. The natives of Eastern India are totally devoid of the hateful prejudices of caste which have proved so strong a bar to the improve-



ment of the people of Hindustan ; but, as it often happens in like cases, while the latter have hundreds of firm friends and advocates in the mother country, not a single individual of influence is to be found to take the slightest interest in the condition of the natives of the Indian Archipelago, or to employ any endeavours to gratify their ardent desire for advancement in knowledge.

The ground at the back of the town is laid out in gardens by the Chinese, who grow large quantities of fruits and vegetables for the supply of the inhabitants. On the bank of the creek are many plantations of pepper and gambier, also cultivated by Chinese, and on the coast of the island to the eastward of the town, and also on the little islets off the harbour, are small agricultural settlements of Bugis and Javanese, who, from their known bravery, are less liable to attacks from the roving Malay pirates, than the more timid Chinese would be, if similarly situated.

In a snug cove called New Harbour, about a mile to the westward of the town, is a large village occupied exclusively by Malays, few of whom apparently follow any occupation, though some guess may be made respecting their mode of procuring subsistence.



The interior of the island is almost unknown to the Europeans, but there is a small independent Chinese settlement a few miles distant from the town, which is said to be very populous, and as considerable quantities of produce are brought thence to the town for sale, their plantations must be extensive. No European has yet visited them.

The soil near the town is of a sandy nature, but is so thickly covered with herbage that this can only be perceived on close inspection. In the interior, the soil is of a better description, and it is found to be well adapted for the growth of pepper, cotton, and indeed all the most valuable articles of Oriental produce. As the Bengali convicts are employed in making a road into the interior of the island, its topography will soon be better known than it is at present.

Singapore is generally considered to be more agreeable as a residence than any other town in India, for the daily arrival of ships from various parts of the world creates constant excitement, while in point of climate it is certainly not inferior to any intertropical sea-port town in the world.\*

\* From my first arrival at Singapore, to my final departure from the Archipelago, a period of twenty-two months, only two deaths occurred among the European residents, and neither



It is equally free from the hot land-winds of the Coromandel coast, and from the pestilential vapours which arise from the Sunderbunds of Calcutta, and the marshes of Batavia. During the north-east monsoon, the breeze from the China Sea renders the atmosphere cool and agreeable, and when it changes to the south-west, the Sumatras, although they always create a sensation among the boats and shipping, contribute greatly to the comfort of the inhabitants by clearing the atmosphere, and blowing the musquitoes far into the interior of the Malay Peninsula.

The Sumatra squalls, which were formerly, and are still in some degree, the terror of those who navigate the Straits of Malacca, are caused by the south-west monsoon being obstructed in its course by the mountains of Sumatra. The approach of the squall is betokened by a dense black cloud which rises from behind the opposite islands of Battam, and soon overspreads the sky, casting a dark shadow over the strait, within which the sea is lashed to foam by the strength of the tornado. Its effects are first felt by the ships in the roads, which heel to the breeze, and swing of these arose from the effects of the climate. One was caused by a fever caught in the China Sea.



round to their anchors, the cables, which were previously hanging in bights under the bows, being now stretched out a-head to their full extent. When it occurs during the hours of business, the gust makes a forcible entry into the merchants' offices; the leaves of the ledgers are turned over without the owner's consent, and invoices and bills of lading take their flight in whirls to the ceiling, giving ample employment to the clerks and *tombies* in retaking and securing them. There is always as much bustle on the river as on shore, for large cargo-boats manned with noisy Klings, come flying into the river before the squall, the crews shouting out to the people on shore to clear the boats from the landing-place. This their own clumsiness generally prevents them from reaching, and they drift among the little floating dwellings of the Malay boatmen, deranging the economy of whole streets, the unlucky Klings receiving the blows and curses of the occupants as they run the gauntlet through the line. The natives on shore generally shelter themselves under the piazzas in front of the houses; but occasionally a Chinaman may be seen rushing along the streets, his tail blown out behind like a man-of-war's pennant, carrying some kadjang mats to cover the goods he has just



brought from a vessel in the roads, which he has not been able to remove to his dwelling before the descent of the rain. The squalls seldom last more than half an hour, when, after a smart shower, the sun again breaks out, and the wind subsides to a pleasant sea-breeze, leaving an agreeable freshness in the atmosphere, which renders the remainder of the day comparatively cool and pleasant.\*

The European population of Singapore is small, and until encouragement is given to individuals to

\* Ranges of Fahrenheit's thermometer at Singapore in the year 1835.

| Months.     | THERMOMETER.    |        |        |              |        |        |          |        |        | Winds.                    | Depth of rain in inches and 10ths, by pluviometer. |
|-------------|-----------------|--------|--------|--------------|--------|--------|----------|--------|--------|---------------------------|----------------------------------------------------|
|             | Greatest range. |        |        | Least range. |        |        | Average. |        |        |                           |                                                    |
|             | 6 A.M.          | 3 P.M. | 8 P.M. | 6 A.M.       | 3 P.M. | 8 P.M. | 6 A.M.   | 3 P.M. | 8 P.M. |                           |                                                    |
| January .   | 80              | 86     | 82     | 76           | 77     | 76     | 78       | 86     | 83     | N.E.                      | 18-5                                               |
| February    | 80              | 88     | 84     | 75           | 77     | 80     | 79       | 85     | 82     | N.E.                      | 1-5                                                |
| March ...   | 80              | 86     | 83     | 75           | 76     | 75     | 78       | 84     | 80     | N. & S.E.                 | 10-8                                               |
| April ..... | 82              | 86     | 84     | 78           | 79     | 80     | 80       | 84     | 82     | { all round<br>the com. } | 3-2                                                |
| May .....   | 82              | 86     | 84     | 78           | 80     | 80     | 80       | 84     | 82     | S.E.                      | 5-0                                                |
| June .....  | 83              | 89     | 85     | 77           | 80     | 79     | 81       | 84     | 82     | { S.E. &<br>S.W. }        | 6-5                                                |
| July .....  | 82              | 88     | 84     | 78           | 79     | 79     | 80       | 87     | 82     | N.E.                      | 4-6                                                |
| August ...  | 82              | 86     | 84     | 75           | 76     | 77     | 79       | 82     | 81     | ditto.                    | 6-9                                                |
| September   | 83              | 86     | 83     | 78           | 80     | 78     | 82       | 84     | 81     | S.E.                      | 3-6                                                |
| October...  | 83              | 88     | 84     | 78           | 79     | 79     | 80       | 83     | 82     | { S.W.&<br>S.E. }         | 10-8                                               |
| November    | 81              | 85     | 82     | 76           | 76     | 76     | 79       | 82     | 80     | { S.W.&<br>N.E. }         | 7-4                                                |
| December    | 80              | 84     | 82     | 73           | 76     | 75     | 77       | 80     | 79     | N.E.                      | 20-7                                               |



settle in the island as planters, it is not likely to increase. At present those who are not in the employ of government are all engaged in commerce, and although the soil and climate are not excelled by those of any country in the Archipelago, the system of land tenure, and the inefficiency of the police, have rendered agricultural pursuits so unsafe and disadvantageous, that not a single European has as yet ventured to undertake them.

The European mode of life, as far as regards the general routine of occupations, is precisely similar to that of Batavia, but there the resemblance ends. At Singapore there exists no political bar to social intercourse; no dread that private conversations may be reported to a jealous and unforgiving government; indeed, the contrast altogether is so great, that I have often felt surprised that a British resident of Batavia who visits Singapore on commercial business, or for the recovery of his health, can ever prevail upon himself to return to that pestilential and misgoverned city.

Amusements of an active nature in which the gentlemen engage, consist chiefly of boat-sailing and shooting, and the former, so decidedly British,



is carried to a greater extent than in any other part of India. Sailing and rowing matches between the sailing-boats of the merchants, and also between the sampans of the Malays, occur almost daily, the native boatmen taking quite as much interest in them as the Europeans.

Those who delight in field-sports find ample amusement in the low lands at the back of the town, which abound in snipes and plovers, or in the creeks on the east side of the harbour, where flocks of pigeons assemble every evening from all parts of the island, to roost on the trees in the little detached islets, where they are free from the attacks of the smaller beasts of prey. Wild pigs and deer are to be met with in the wilder parts of the interior, but the jungle is too thick for the chase. Tigers occasionally visit the island from the Malay Peninsula, there being no difficulty in crossing the narrow strait; but as they resort to the neighbourhood of the settlement in quest of food, they are generally caught soon after their arrival by the Malays, who are very skilful in entrapping them.

A few years after the establishment of the settlement, an individual who arrived from Bengal



brought with him a male and a female jackal, and thinking perhaps to confer an inestimable benefit on the colony, he turned them into the jungle, where these noisy and troublesome animals have now become numerous, and often remind the inhabitants of their existence by making domiciliary visits to the poultry yards.

Among the amusements of the Europeans may be included the paper warfare carried on by individuals through the medium of the two public journals, and a single glance will shew to what an extent it prevails. "Libertas" inserts a letter in the Free Press concerning some grievance, probably a decision of the Court, and his arguments and assertions are refuted in the next Chronicle by "Philo Lex:" "Agricola," and "Agricola Secundus," maintain a discussion concerning the agricultural capabilities of the island; and the letter of "A Tory" is speedily answered by "Anti Humbug." As the parties are generally those best acquainted with the subjects under review, this exchange of opinions is found both amusing and instructive, for the inhabitants are enabled to see both sides of the question, and may therefore judge for themselves.



The two journals are, of course, ministerial and opposition. From the talent and liberality with which they are conducted, and from the fund of information they contain concerning the affairs of Eastern India, they are justly held to be inferior to few periodical publications in the East.

Singapore contains an epitome of the population of the whole Archipelago, and indeed of Continental India also. Chinese, Malays, Bugis, Javanese, Balinese, natives of Bengal and Madras, Parsees, Arabs, and Caffrees, are to be found within the circuit of a few miles, each people forming a separate community, and retaining its customs as completely as if it had never been transplanted.

An early walk through Campong Glam will serve to give a stranger a good idea of the habits and occupations of the different classes. Near the residence of the Sultan he will meet with Malays, lounging about near the doors of their houses, chewing betel, with their sarongs, which usually hang loosely about the waist, wrapped round the body to shelter the wearer from the cool morning breeze. The main street, however, will have a very different appearance. There Chinese



mechanics will be busily employed forging iron-work, making furniture, or building boats; and the level green near the sea will be occupied by Bugis, who have landed from their prahus to mend their sails, or to twist rope and cables from the materials which they have brought with them. In a portion of the back part of the campong, natives of Sambawa, a far distant island to the eastward of Java, will be found chopping young trees into billets for fire-wood, and making hurdles for fencing; and in another, Bengali washermen hanging out clothes to dry, and dairymen of the same nation milking their cows to supply the breakfast tables of the Europeans. On the roads Klings will occasionally be encountered conducting tumbrils drawn by buffaloes cased in mud and dirt; the creaking of the wheels almost drowning the voice of the driver as he bawls to the animals, in his harsh and discordant jargon. Each nation, indeed, is found pursuing avocations which best accord with its tastes and habits.

The following census of the population of Singapore taken in 1833, will shew the relative proportions of the various classes of inhabitants in the town and the neighbouring plantations and villages.



*The Census of the Population of Singapore.*

| Classes.                                              | Males. | Females. | Total. |
|-------------------------------------------------------|--------|----------|--------|
| Europeans .....                                       | 91     | 28       | 119    |
| Indo-Britons.....                                     | 56     | 40       | 96     |
| Native Christians.....                                | 167    | 133      | 300    |
| Armenians .....                                       | 27     | 8        | 35     |
| Jews.....                                             | 2      | 0        | 2      |
| Arabs .....                                           | 96     | 0        | 96     |
| Chinese.....                                          | 7,650  | 867      | 8,517  |
| Malays .....                                          | 3,673  | 3,368    | 7,131  |
| Natives of the Coromandel and<br>Malabar Coasts ..... | 1,762  | 57       | 1,819  |
| Bengalis .....                                        | 389    | 11       | 400    |
| Natives of Celebes (Bugis),<br>Bali, &c. ....         | 794    | 932      | 1,726  |
| Javanese .....                                        | 361    | 234      | 595    |
| Siamese .....                                         | 5      | 2        | 7      |
| Negroes .....                                         | 23     | 14       | 37     |

Total population, 20,978.

The inhabitants of the independent Chinese settlement in the interior of the island are not included in the census.

Of the native population of Singapore, the Chinese are the most numerous and the most important, indeed their industry and perseverance



have mainly contributed to the present flourishing state of the settlement.

The Malacca-born Chinese hold more direct intercourse with the European merchants than the others. Many of these are born of Malay mothers, but, as they always adopt the manners and mode of dress of their fathers, they are scarcely to be distinguished from the actual natives of China, and although they are probably less active and energetic than the latter, they are more enlightened, and make better merchants. Many of this class who have been educated at the Malacca college speak English tolerably well, and, from their constant communication with Europeans, they have acquired in some measure their general habits and mode of transacting business, which renders them more agreeable to the latter than those who have not enjoyed similar advantages. They are all employed in commerce, many as independent merchants, and some are engaged as cashiers and under-clerks in the offices of Europeans.

The most intelligent, and, perhaps, the most wealthy of this class, is Chong Long, whose father was Capitan China of Malacca, when that town was under the sway of the Dutch. He resides at



Campong Glam, in a large mansion, one of the handsomest buildings in the town, in which he sometimes gives entertainments in the European style to the British inhabitants. The Malacca-born Chinese are always remarkably clean and well dressed, and few are obliged to resort to manual labour.

The emigrants from China are chiefly mechanics, agriculturists, and labourers, but many are also engaged in commerce. The most wealthy of the latter is Che Sang, a miserly old man, who appears to great disadvantage when compared with the liberal and well-informed Chong Long. His sole aim has been the acquirement of riches, and he is supposed to possess immense wealth. His cash is deposited in a number of iron chests, among which he always sleeps. It is said that a considerable portion of this treasure has been acquired by gambling, to which he is much addicted. On one occasion fortune deserted him, and he lost a considerable sum, which so terribly disconcerted the old man, that he took a most solemn oath never to touch dice again, and, to punish himself for his indiscretion, and as a memento of his oath, he cut off the first joint of one of his little fingers. The ruling passion, however, proved too strong,



and he soon embarked in gambling as deeply as ever.

The commercial activity of the Chinese is seen to the greatest advantage during the annual visit of the junks from the Celestial Empire; these remain in the harbour from December until June, and, throughout the whole period, boats filled with Chinese are continually passing and repassing among the shipping, giving to the roads the appearance of a floating fair.

The first junk, which arrives generally a little before Christmas, is most anxiously looked for, and when its approach is notified by the crew of a Malay sampan which has been on the look out to the eastward, the greatest bustle pervades the Chinese community: some running along the streets to communicate the important intelligence to their friends, come in contact with others rushing from the opposite direction, and many hasten off to the vessel to learn the news from China, every thing that will float, from a sampan to a cargo-boat, being put in requisition. The first boat reaches the junk when she is still several miles distant, and as she nears the town, she gains an accession of bulk at every fathom, until at last the unwieldy mass slowly trails into



the roads, surrounded by a dense mass of boats, having the appearance of a locust which has inadvertently crossed an ant's nest, and is dragging after it countless myriads of the enraged inhabitants attached to its legs and feelers. As the decks of the junk are always crowded with emigrants, the greater proportion of the visitors are obliged to remain in the boats, and these endeavour to gain as much information as they can by shouting out questions to the people on board. The Chinese sailing-master, who struts about on the top of the thatched habitation on the quarter deck, with all the importance of a mandarin with a peacock's feather, endeavours in vain to make himself heard above the noise, so that the junk is generally brought up in the outer roads until sufficiently cleared of its visitors to render it safe for it to enter into the inner anchorage.

Other junks soon arrive, and although these do not excite quite so much interest as the first, the same scene is acted over in each. For a day or two after their arrival there is little business transacted, as the crews are all engaged in building roofs over the vessels to shelter the wares which are to be exposed for sale on the decks. When these arrangements are completed, the fair



commences, and the junks are surrounded from morning until night by the boats of the Chinese traders from the shore.

When an European wishes to view the economy of the junks, he is always treated with respect, and is generally invited to the place of honor, and presented with refreshments of oranges and sweet-meats.

From five thousand to eight thousand emigrants arrive annually from China, of whom only forty or fifty are females. About one-eighth of these people remain at Singapore, and the others scatter themselves over the Archipelago. The majority proceed to the tin mines near Malacca, and on the island of Banca, to the pepper plantations on Bintang, and to the gold mines at Pahang, and on the western coast of Borneo.

The landing of the emigrants from the junks forms a very interesting sight, and if I happened to be in the town at the arrival of a large junk, I generally stationed myself near the landing-place to watch their proceedings. They usually came on shore in large cargo-boats, each carrying from fifty to sixty persons, scarcely any space being left for the rowers. As the boat approached the landing-place, which was always on those occasions



crowded with Chinese, the emigrants would cast anxious glances among them, and a ray of delight would occasionally brighten the countenance of one of the "high aspirants," on recognizing the face of a relative or friend, on whose favourable report he had probably decided on leaving his country. The boat was always anchored a short distance from the landing-place, and a squabble would immediately commence between the Kling boatmen and the Chinese passengers, many of the latter being unprovided with the few halfpence required to pay their passage from the vessel. The Klings would bawl, and lay down the law in their guttural jargon, and the Chinese would remonstrate in scarcely less barbarous Fokeen, each being totally unintelligible to the other. After some delay the boat would be pushed in for the shore, and the emigrants, taking up their sleeping mats and small bundles, which formed all their worldly wealth, would proceed to the abodes of their friends, or scatter themselves over the town in search of lodgings.

These affairs, however, do not always terminate so quietly, for it occasionally happens that the passengers, annoyed at the insulting conduct of the boatmen, bundle them overboard, and land



without making any payment. The enraged Klings load their adversaries with abuse, the only weapon they dare to wield, and their mortification is increased by finding themselves the laughing-stock of the spectators : for their disagreeable manners render them so universally detested, that their misfortunes rarely meet with any sympathy.

The majority of the emigrants embark in China without sufficient money to pay their passage to Singapore, and these defaulters remain in the vessel until they are redeemed by their friends, who pay the amount ; or by strangers engaging their services for a stipulated period, and paying their passage money as an advance of wages. The mechanics soon acquire capital, as they always work hard on their first arrival ; but many, finding that money can be easily obtained, indulge in gambling and opium-smoking, becoming eventually as dissolute as they were previously industrious.

To avoid persecution, every Chinese finds it necessary on his arrival to become a member of one of the secret societies, all of which have the object in China of overthrowing the present dynasty, while they are at Singapore rendered



subservient to the national propensity for plunder, as one member will always screen another from detection. The different sects, however, hate each other cordially ; therefore the peaceable inhabitants do not suffer so much from their aggressions as if they formed a united body.

It is to be expected that many bad characters arrive, among such considerable numbers of the lower classes of a people by no means famed for their morality ; indeed, a fair proportion of the emigrants consists of those who prefer living by ways and means, to gaining an honest subsistence by labour. Great facilities are afforded to these, as their countrymen term them, “ disorderly planners of lucky and extraordinary means of gain,” the independent village in the interior forming an excellent receptacle for stolen goods, and affording a safe refuge for those delinquents who are sought after by the authorities.

The houses in the outskirts of the town are often attacked by bands of Chinese robbers from the interior, but fortunately they are such arrant cowards that they retreat on the slightest opposition. One fine night during my stay, a body of about fifty, armed with spears and lighted with torches, attacked the village of the Bengali dobies.



The dobies fled, and the Chinese seized upon the linen, clean and dirty, and hastened back towards their fastnesses, bearing away a fair proportion of the wardrobes of the European ladies and gentlemen. Although the cowardly washermen thought of nothing save flight, the robbers did not retreat unmolested, for a gentleman who resided on the outskirts of the town having witnessed their descent, mustered two or three Malays, armed with a couple of fowling-pieces, and laid wait near the road-side for their return. As the robbers passed, triumphing in the idea of carrying away so much valuable booty, of shirts and petticoats, the little party fired, and brought down two of them, on which the remainder took to flight, utterly regardless of the fate of their comrades. The assailants pursued, and the robbers, to escape as they supposed impending destruction, dropped their bundles, so that their line of retreat was pointed out next morning by the wearing apparel scattered on the road, which was collected and returned to the rightful owners.

Strict regulations are absolutely necessary for the well-being of the Chinese: for to the almost perfect freedom from control which they enjoy, so different from the rigid laws to which they are



subjected in their own country, may be traced their dissolute habits in this settlement. In Java, where the police regulations are extremely strict, the Chinese are remarkably well behaved, and crime is comparatively of rare occurrence.



## CHAPTER XII.

### SINGAPORE.

Malay Settlers.—Their Pursuits.—People of Menangkabu.—Running a-muck.—Sampan Boys.—Boat Racing.—Malay Chiefs.—Pirates.—Their system.—Alarming extent to which it is carried.—Bugis.—Their Honesty and Commercial Enterprise.—Erroneously supposed to be addicted to Piracy.—Settlers from Continental India.—Native Christians.—Jesuit Missionaries.—Effect of their Doctrines on the Natives.—Religious State of the Natives of the Archipelago.

A few hundreds only of the Malays established in Singapore are natives of the island, the remainder being emigrants from the Malay Peninsula and Sumatra. The former are chiefly the dependants of the two chiefs who reside at Singapore; and the pernicious example set by these nobles and the wretches about them, greatly retards the improvement of the rest of their countrymen. The Malays in the vicinity of the abodes of these grandees and their satellites are generally idle in the extreme, while the settlers from the other states, who are not under the control of the chiefs,



form the most industrious portion of the Malay community.

The emigrants are chiefly those who have flocked to Singapore to find employment, or to take refuge from the anarchy and confusion consequent on the frequent recurrence of political commotions in the Mahomedan states. They are not remarkable for their industry, but are so far superior to those found in the misgoverned and oppressed districts, under the controul of native chiefs, as to make it evident that the dissolute mode of life for which the Malays are famed is, in a great measure, the result of the circumstances under which they are placed. In the latter there is no grade between a noble and a serf, the one being enriched by the oppression of the other. In some states similarly situated, the lower classes are enabled to rise to distinction by engaging in commerce; but among the Malays the nobles are also merchants, and as the people are unable to compete with them, their energies are destroyed, and they have no wish to acquire anything beyond the means necessary for their subsistence. In the British settlement, however, the Malays, finding that they are not burthened with the support of a dissolute and luxurious nobility, and that they will themselves enjoy



the fruits of their labour, acquire habits of industry, which, though not equal to those of the other native settlers, suffice to show that they are not incapable of improvement.

It is not to be expected that the Malays or any other people can suddenly become sober cultivators of the earth, after having been long accustomed to view maritime adventure as the only honourable method of gaining a subsistence ; and therefore the first germs of their industry are displayed in pursuits more in accordance with their former mode of life. The favourite occupations of those who are not employed in boats and prahus, consists in cutting timber for ships' masts and building materials, and in constructing wooden houses. Every Malay understands the use of the axe sufficiently to cut down and shape a tree, or to build the simple dwellings which the natives find to be adequate to afford them shelter in a country where the weather is never inclement, and where the free admission of the breeze is considered as being more conducive to comfort than its exclusion. Several men generally join in partnership, and contract to build houses, or to procure spars and timber for the shipwrights. The latter are chiefly obtained from the neighbour-



ing islands, on which the Malays take up their residence for weeks together, remaining until a sufficient number of spars have been rafted. They work with great vigour and industry, in order to fulfil their contracts; and when those are completed, live in idleness until their funds are exhausted, and it becomes necessary to resume their labours for the purpose of obtaining new supplies, the stimulating power of actual want being essential to rouse them to exertion. Notwithstanding the lazy habits so commonly evinced, we have ample reason to conclude that the Malays are naturally an industrious people, an inference which must be drawn from the present state of Menangkabu, a country in the interior of Sumatra, whence the Malays of the Archipelago derive their origin. The Malays of Menangkabu, though Mahomedans, have as yet held comparatively little communication with the Arabs; and, in consequence of the absence of an injurious influence, their country is well governed, and in a high state of cultivation. Very considerable quantities of pepper and coffee are brought thence down the large rivers to Singapore, and their mechanical genius is displayed in the construction of sugar-presses of a description far



superior to those in use among the demi-civilized natives of Java.

To judge from the number of cases tried before the court, there is less crime among the Malays than among the Chinese, but there are probably many instances which do not come to the knowledge of the authorities. Running a-muck (*mung amok*) is now almost obsolete ; indeed it never prevailed to any extent except in those places in which the natives were oppressed beyond human endurance. The only instance that came under my knowledge during the two years of my acquaintance with the settlement, occurred in the case of a Bugis sailor. This man was suffering under an acute attack of a dreadful disease ; and, while receiving the attendance of a relative on board his prahu, suddenly seized his kris, and killed him. The invalid, or rather the maniac, then rushed on deck, and attacking every body indiscriminately, killed and wounded several others. The remainder of the crew jumped overboard, and were followed by the murderer, who was taken in the water after some resistance. He was tried at the criminal court ; but acquitted on the ground of insanity. When I finally left Singapore he was still in confinement, and had perfectly recovered his health



under the skilful management of the colonial surgeon, but I never heard what eventually became his fate.

An improvement in the character of the Malays is evident, in all those places in which they have enjoyed much communication with Europeans, for, although the former are Mahommedans, they regard their Christian visitors with great respect, looking upon them as belonging to a people much farther advanced in knowledge and morality than even their Arab teachers: a point of no small importance in the progress of civilisation.

The influence which constant intercourse with the British has exercised upon the habits of the Malays is shown to great advantage in the case of the watermen, or sampan-boys, in whom it has worked a complete change, almost amounting to regeneration. This improvement is rendered the more apparent from the boatmen in the adjacent creeks (who are chiefly employed in ferrying natives) remaining much in the same state as that in which they were found on the arrival of the British. The latter are to be seen lazily paddling about in short clumsy sampans, crouched with their knees up to their chins; wearing no other clothing than a small piece of cloth round the



waist, and a conical shaped hat on their heads, the rims of which project far out, almost concealing the countenance. The boatmen in the Singapore river, however, perhaps the brothers and relatives of these very men, are full of life and activity, managing their long and "trim built" sampans with a skill not excelled by that of the smartest Thames' waterman. Their dress also is perfectly changed. They have habited themselves neatly in shirt and pantaloons, and throwing off the palm leaf hat, have adopted in its stead a gay handkerchief, which does not impede their motions while managing the canoe.

This salutary change has been effected chiefly in consequence of the taste for aquatic sports displayed by many of the Europeans, who, perhaps on account of the dearth of amusements during the infancy of the settlement, laid wagers with each other on the capabilities of the different boats, and induced the boatmen to pull, in order to decide their bets. The Malays soon entered into the spirit of the thing, taking even a stronger degree of interest in the respective races than their backers themselves. Those who were defeated, endeavoured to gain their lost ground by improving the construction of their boats, which,



from short tubs, pulled by a single man, became in the course of a few years perfect models for swiftness; and which, when manned with five active Malays, have never yet been beaten by any boats, European or native, that have been brought against them.

These boats are from twenty to thirty feet long, and are about four feet in width, having much the appearance of Thames-wherries. When racing they carry five men, but on ordinary occasions only three. The management of the boat chiefly depends on the steersman, who wields a large paddle, with which he not only steers, but propels the boat so much as to add greatly to its speed.

When sailing, they hoist two large sprit-sails made of mats, which are reefed and furled by rolling them round the mast. These are so disproportionate to the size of the vessel, that the greatest nicety is required in their management, and when the breeze is strong, a plank is thrust out to windward as an outrigger, on which a man stands, whose weight prevents the boat from capsizing. They often carry on sail to such a degree that the boat is run bows under and swamped, but the men are such excellent swimmers, that loss of life rarely occurs.



It is only when racing, however, that such accidents happen, on which occasions they will never take Europeans with them. When carrying passengers, one sail only is used; and although this appears to be too large for the boat, I never heard of a single case of one of them being capsized. A sampan, with three men, is always engaged by the commander of a ship to attend upon his vessel during her stay in the port. The daily pay for men and boat is only half-a-crown; and, for the sum of thirty dollars, a party will undertake to convey letters to Penang, which is distant nearly four hundred miles.

The sampan-boys reside in little covered boats like those of the Badjus on the coast of Borneo, which are secured to stakes in the middle of the river. No portion of their family is idle, for the women carry about fruits and sweetmeats to sell to the crews of native vessels in the roads, and the male children are employed in ferrying people across the river, for which they receive a doit, about half a farthing, each passenger. Many of these little fellows are scarcely five years old, and are not nearly so high as the paddles they wield. They are excellent swimmers and divers, and if a copper doit be thrown into the water while the



boat is crossing the river, some will immediately jump overboard after it, while one of them generally succeeds in catching it before it reaches the bottom. When several of them dive after the same coin, their heads sometimes come in concussion near the point of attraction, and the doit reaches the bottom, where, on account of the mud and the depth of the water, they can rarely find it.

On the morning of Christmas day, before the merchants come into town, the boatmen are in the habit of decking the entrances of their town-houses with plantain stems and green boughs. This little mark of attention is not shown with a view to a present in the shape of a "Christmas-box," as the residents rarely know by whom it is effected. The houses of those who are in the habit of treating them with rudeness are sometimes neglected.

The two Malay chiefs residing in the settlement are both *pensionnaires* of the East-India Company. One is the Sultan of Johore, a neighbouring state on the Peninsula, by whom Singapore and the islands near the coast were ceded to the British; and the other is the Tumung-gung, a petty chief, nominally a tributary to the Sultan, who was found in possession of the country about Singapore.



The Sultan\* of Johore resides in a large rambling thatched habitation at Campong-glam. He is a man far advanced in years, and is so enormously stout that he appears to be continually on the point of suffocation. He cannot attend to his own affairs, which are administered by several Hadjees and petty chiefs, who have been attracted about him by the pension of fifteen thousand dollars, which he enjoys from the government. As to his present character, he can scarcely be said to have one, for he exists only in a torpid state; and of his former reputation he has no reason to be proud.

The Tumung-gung is a young man, and like most of the nobles, remarkable, even among the Malays, for his depravity. Although a *pensionnaire* of the Company to the annual amount of four thousand five hundred dollars, he is strongly suspected of encouraging the pirates, who, for years have been murdering and plundering the native traders almost within sight of the harbour; and, if not personally engaged in piratical pursuits, it is well known that many of those in his confidence are absent for considerable periods under very suspicious circumstances. The Tumung-gung resides in a village exclusively inhabited by Malays, situated

\* This individual died in the early part of 1836.



in a small cove about a mile and a half to the westward of the town, from which it is entirely concealed by the intervening hills.

The Malay pirates absolutely swarm in the neighbourhood of Singapore, the numerous islands in the vicinity, the intersecting channels of which are known only to themselves, affording them a snug retreat, whence they can pounce upon the defenceless native traders, and drag them into their lairs to plunder them at their leisure. Square-rigged vessels are generally allowed to pass unmolested, for the pirates, who are as cowardly as they are cruel, rarely attack craft of this description, unless they have received authentic information from their spies at Singapore that they may be taken with facility.

The system of piracy is perfect in its nature, more so even than that which formerly obtained among the Buccaneers of America. A petty chief of one of the Malay states, who has either been ruined by gambling, or is desirous to improve his fortune, collects under his banner as many restless spirits as he can muster, and sails for one of the most retired islands in the neighbourhood of Singapore. Here he erects a village as a depôt for slaves and plunder, and then lies in wait with his armed



prahus, near the frequented waters, for the native traders passing to and from the British settlement. Should the chief be eminently successful, he soon gains a large accession to his force, and his village increases to a small town, while his fleet of prahus becomes sufficiently numerous to be subdivided into several squadrons, which cruise in the various straits and channels.

The pirates generally sail in fleets of from three to twenty prahus. These are armed with guns, large and small, and each prahu carries from fifteen to forty men. The vessels which they succeed in capturing are brought to the settlement, where they are plundered and afterwards burnt; and the goods are taken for sale to Singapore or New Harbour, in prahus of their own, which are fitted up to resemble traders. The unfortunate natives who compose the crews of the captured prahus, are carried to Lingin, or to the opposite coast of Sumatra, where they are sold to the Malays, to cultivate the pepper plantations in the interior.

A glance at the Singapore journals will show to what an extent the system of piracy prevails; and it must be remembered that the instances with which their columns teem, form only a small pro-



portion of the number which actually occur, as it rarely happens that any of the sufferers escape to tell the tale. The detrimental effect that this predatory warfare must produce on the commerce of Singapore is obvious, and there can be no doubt that thousands of the natives of the islands, who would otherwise visit the settlement for the disposal of the produce of their industry, are now deterred from so doing by a dread of encountering these remorseless wretches. In mercy, therefore, to the native traders who visit the settlement on the supposition that they will at least be free from violence when within sight of the British flag, some measures should be taken to put an end to the system. I regret the necessity which obliges me to repeat, that nothing but the most rigorous measures, even to the utter annihilation of those who may be caught in the fact, will tend to check the evil; for the pirates having long been permitted to commit their murders and robberies with impunity, now consider themselves to be almost invincible, and therefore require some very severe lessons to bring them to their senses. The frightful acts daily committed, however, will never be entirely suppressed until those Malay chiefs who encourage the pirates, by affording them assistance



and protection, receive some substantial proof that such practices will not be permitted with impunity. To shew how very easily the banditti of these seas may be deterred from their aggressions, I will mention a single case in point. A few years ago an American merchant ship was attacked and taken by the Malay inhabitants of Qualla Battu or the west coast of Sumatra. When this circumstance became known in the United States, the President, with a promptitude worthy of the chief magistrate of a great commercial nation, immediately despatched a frigate to chastise the offenders, and Qualla Battu was attacked and burnt. This act of retribution has produced a very beneficial effect, since, although many American ships annually resort to the coast, not a single instance has occurred of one of them being attacked or molested.

Severe punishments inflicted upon those who have been guilty of piratical offences, would be an act of mercy to the Malays themselves, for it would induce many to direct their attention to commerce, who, but for this wholesome fear, would be tempted to join the marauders, on account of the large profits which they acquire in the attack of defenceless traders, almost without



danger in the encounter. The Malay pirates, although they fight hard when driven to extremity, are, in reality, great cowards; and a single defeat will so effectually damp their ardour, that, after having sustained it, a long time will elapse before they venture to show themselves again. In 1833, his Majesty's ship *Harrier*, the only ship of war which has lately performed any signal service in the suppression of piracy, destroyed a haunt on the Carimons, (a group of islands near Singapore,) and no act of aggression was committed for several weeks afterwards.\*

The population of the Bugis colony established

\* By late accounts from Singapore, it appears that Captain Chad, of H.M.S. *Alligator*, has been making very formidable attacks upon the pirates; not content with cutting up several of their fleets, he has destroyed some of their haunts. These objects have been effected almost without any expenditure, save that of powder and shot, one man only having been wounded. The pirates invariably retreated before the man-of-war's boats, even when the former were ten times superior, numerically speaking. Captain Chad seems to have displayed great tact in the conduct of his operations, and he must either have possessed considerable knowledge respecting the Malays, or has not disdained to act upon the hints of those who are well acquainted with their habits and character. He adopted a very successful *ruse*, that of disguising his vessel so as to have it mistaken for a native merchant ship. The Malays will be nearly certain hereafter to fancy every square-rigged vessel which they may meet to be a man-of-war.



at Singapore, scarcely exceeds eight hundred ; but between two and three hundred of their prahus, carrying crews of from ten to thirty men each, annually visit the settlement, bringing the produce of Celebes, the east and south coasts of Borneo, and of all the islands to the eastward.

The Bugis, whose native country is the island of Celebes, bear a strong personal resemblance to the Malays ; but in honesty, energy of character, and general conduct, they are far superior. They are deservedly praised for their upright conduct in commercial transactions ; greater reliance being placed on their bare word, by those who are acquainted with the native character, than on the most sacred oaths taken by the natives of Bengal and Coromandel.

The commercial enterprise of these modern Phœnicians is unequalled in any part of the world ; every soul, male or female, from the prince to the peasant, being more or less engaged in trade, and their adventurous spirit induces them to undertake the most arduous voyages in vessels very ill adapted to brave the perils of the ocean. They are the chief and almost the sole carriers of the Archipelago, collecting the produce of the various islands, and bringing it to the great commercial mart, Singa-



pore. Our navigators who surveyed the north coast of New Holland, found nothing to induce commercial speculators to turn their attention to it; yet the Bugis visit these shores annually with from eighty to a hundred prahus, and the trepang and tortoise-shell fishery affords employment to at least a thousand men.

Notwithstanding the infamous restrictions imposed on the importation of British goods by a rival European power, which unfortunately has gained possession of their country, the Bugis have scattered our manufactures over the whole of the Archipelago, and have introduced them to many places where the face of an European has never been seen. Since the establishment of Singapore, the British and the Bugis have become better acquainted with each other, and their friendship is the more likely to be lasting from its bonds being formed of a material of the most durable description, namely, mutual advantage.

It is supposed by strangers who pass through the Archipelago, and who are apt to consider all the vessels with brown sides and mat sails which they meet with in the light of rovers, that the Bugis traders are addicted to piracy. That individuals of the Bugis nation are to be found, who, as



the Chinese say, “indulge in disorderly thoughts and actions, and go about madly scheming irregular profits,” I do not pretend to dispute, but during my sojourn in Eastern India I never heard of a single instance of a piratical attack by a Bugis trader; and, on the contrary, several circumstances have come to my knowledge which would go to prove that their inclinations tend the contrary way. On one occasion a small Spanish lugger found herself at daylight one morning in the midst of a fleet of about eighty Bugis prahus; and, although this occurred near the island of Flores, in the wildest part of the Archipelago, the little vessel was allowed to pass without molestation. On another occasion a small Dutch vessel, commanded by an Englishman, met with several Bugis prahus at an island near New Guinea, which had rarely been visited by European ships, and therefore it was to be expected that the Bugis would consider them as interlopers. During the stay of this vessel, some quarrel with the natives of the island having taken place, the latter attacked and seized her, after driving out the crew. The Bugis, however, shewed a fellow-feeling for the adventurers, and re-capturing the vessel, delivered it over inviolate to the rightful owner.



Little need be said respecting the natives of Western India, found at Singapore, since they do not differ in any particular from those of the mother country. The natives of the Coromandel coast, called synonymously Klings, Chuliahs, and Tombies, are by far the most numerous. Three-fourths of them are boatmen; and they are found to be very useful in manning cargo-boats, and doing all the laborious part of boating-work, for which the Malays have no taste. The manners of the Kling boatmen, which resemble those of their brethren at Madras, and are equally disagreeable, appear to great disadvantage when compared with the more orderly and pleasing demeanour of the Javanese, the Bugis, and the Malays. Cringingly servile to their superiors, insolent when they can offend with impunity, totally devoid of honesty or principle, noisy, dirty, and disgusting, they render themselves universally detested.

Of the three hundred native Christians mentioned in the census, at least nine-tenths are Roman Catholics, who are either descendants of the Portuguese, or converts to the French Jesuits. There is a clergyman of the Church of England in the settlement, who performs divine service in



a house which has been fitted up, and consecrated for a chapel. There are also two or three dissenting missionaries at Singapore, but they do not appear to have much success in the conversion of the natives, the effects of their labours being rarely heard of in the settlement, except through the medium of missionary publications brought out from England.

The head of the Portuguese church is an apostolic vicar, under the diocese of Goa. He is extremely jealous of the French Jesuits, who have drawn from him the greater part of his flock; and he is constantly in the habit of making furious protests against their performance of religious rites, in the shape of advertisements in the Singapore journals, which, however, are perfectly unheeded by the Jesuit missionaries. Two only of the latter are established in the town; but it is occasionally visited by others from Cochin China, Siam, and other parts of Eastern Asia.

M. Albran, an enthusiastic young man, has met with great success in converting the Chinese, although he has not yet acquired anything approaching to a perfect knowledge of their language. With the assistance of the funds subscribed by the inhabitants, both Protestant and Catholic, and



with the gratuitous labour of his Chinese converts, he has erected a handsome little chapel, the only Christian place of worship in the island, with the exception of the bungalow in which the Protestant service is performed.

The labours of the Jesuits are confined to the Pagan natives in the settlement, for the Mahomedans hold their form of religion in great contempt, and are apt to designate it as "Christian Idolatry." The great success they have met with in Cochin China, and in other parts of Eastern Asia, is to be attributed to their entire devotion to the cause in which they are engaged, their attention being solely turned towards the propagation of their faith: pecuniary emolument cannot be their object, for the pittance allowed for their support is in itself insufficient to tempt them to embark in so difficult and dangerous a service. Whenever they have gained a considerable body of converts, they generally endeavour to acquire a political supremacy, with a view to convert the entire population by a *coup-de-main*. This was the case in Cochin China, during my stay in the Archipelago. The Jesuits, who had been tolerated by the government, made great progress, but they induced their converts to rebel, and the conse-



quence was, that two of them were beheaded, and the remainder were expelled the country. The system may be found to answer in countries like Paraguay and California, where the natives are divided into many petty tribes; but in powerful kingdoms, which possess a substantial government, the results must be very different.

I regret that my regard for the welfare of the natives of the Indian Archipelago forces me to entertain a wish that the Jesuits may meet with little success, and that the natives may rather remain in their present state, let it be ever so barbarous, than be converted through their instrumentality. The religion they profess is evidently totally unfitted for the natives of India, those who have adopted it being everywhere the lowest of the low, far inferior in point of morality even to the man-slaying Dyaks of Borneo. They become Christians and the most slavish idolaters at the same time, for the images of the Saints which are placed before them by their converters, are worshipped as their gods; and, although the Almighty is mentioned in the prayers which they learn by rote, without understanding them, they totally forget to contemplate him as a Supreme Being:



the Saints become their deities, and on them they call for aid in the hour of distress.

The doctrine of absolution also works incalculable mischief, for the ignorant natives are led to believe that the crimes they commit in this world, be they ever so gross, will entail no punishment in the next, provided they take the precaution of obtaining absolution from the priests. The converted natives of the Phillipine Islands, who are held by their teachers to be the best Christians in the East, have become the most blood-thirsty savages in existence ; and the murders that have been committed by them on many Englishmen, who, on account of the reputation which the Manilla-men have obtained for very good sailors, have been indiscreet enough to employ them on board their ships, proves that they are bound by no ties of gratitude, since they have not hesitated to assassinate those who have treated them with the utmost kindness. The doctrine inculcated by the Spanish priests, that the slaying of an heretic is an action of which no good Catholic should be ashamed, requires no comment.

If we may judge from what has already occurred, the Catholic religion can never gain a firm footing



in the East. The once powerful settlements of the Portuguese have either been forced from them, or, if left unmolested, have dwindled into insignificance. Goa, formerly the “Queen of the East,” is now reduced to a miserable provincial town, governed, or rather misgoverned, by priests; without commerce or manufactures, one half of the population having apparently no other occupation than that of endeavouring to cut the throats of the other half.

The same remark is equally applicable to the Mahomedan kingdoms in Eastern India, all of which were at their zenith when the religion of Islam was first introduced, and have rapidly decreased in importance since its general adoption. The once mighty kingdom of Acheen is now no more than a petty state, the crown of which would, a few years past, have been placed upon the head of an obscure native merchant of Penang, but for the interposition of the East-India Company.

Of the twenty millions of inhabitants in the Indian Archipelago, about one half are Mahomedans. The remainder are chiefly pagans, who, it has been satisfactorily proved, are to be converted with facility. These will probably soon become either Mahomedans or Christians; but, unless



some active exertions shall be made by the latter, the former will soon gain sufficient influence to prevent the introduction of any religion except their own. The labours of the British missionaries have been absolutely thrown away, for they have invariably remained at the chief settlements of the Europeans, where the natives have already adopted the Mahomedan religion, and are too much under the control of their teachers to pay any attention to the arguments of religious adventurers professing a different creed.

The Dutch missionaries, however, have pursued a different course, and the success they have met with points it out as being that which should be generally adopted. They have established themselves on several of the islands to the eastward, particularly Timor and those adjacent, where the natives, though addicted to war and perhaps to cannibalism, were anxious to receive instruction, and if their success has not been commensurate with that of the missionaries in the South Sea islands, it is only from their having been unable to bring commerce to the aid of religion, as an instrument of civilization.

The great success which has rewarded the exertions of these meritorious men, is chiefly to be



attributed to their having used their utmost endeavours in the first place to effect the conversion of the chiefs; and, when this grand object has been accomplished, the people have readily followed their example. The missionaries are invariably, on their arrival, unmarried men, and they generally marry the daughters of chiefs, who esteem an alliance with Europeans as being highly honourable. They thus gain a footing in their families, and of course have numerous opportunities of conversing and reasoning with their fathers-in-law.\*

Although a firm advocate for the diffusion of Christianity in its milder forms, I should be sorry to see the missionaries attain the same *political* influence which those in the Sandwich Islands possess; for there, the too intimate a connexion between church and state is found to be very detrimental to improvement, both religious and commercial.

\* The first missionaries to the Society Islands who took their wives and families out with them, and therefore formed a community separate from the natives, were established in the islands fifteen years without effecting anything; and they would probably have continued unsuccessful much longer, had not misfortunes accidentally thrown the king among them. He became a Christian, and, on regaining his kingdom, soon induced his dependents to follow his example.



## CHAPTER XIII.

### SINGAPORE.

Form of Government at Singapore.—Revenue and Expenditure.  
—Proposed Infliction of Duties.—Agricultural Capabilities.  
—Pepper and Gambír Plantations.—Sago and Agar-agar.—  
Timber.—Commerce.—Mercantile Houses.—Mode of Trans-  
acting Business.—Decrease of Trade at Singapore.—Com-  
mercial Report.

THE island of Singapore, together with the smaller islands within ten miles of its shores, was ceded to the East-India Company by the Sultan of Johore, on the consideration of an annual stipend to himself and the Tumung-gung, of twenty thousand dollars. The legislative administration of the settlement is now under the superintendence of a civil servant of the Company, who is governor of the three settlements in the Straits of Malacca: Singapore, Malacca, and Penang. He chiefly resides at the latter place, but occasionally visits the two others. The local administration of Singa-



pore being entrusted to a resident councillor, who permanently resides in the settlement.

The resident holds a daily court, to decide on petty differences; but cases of importance are referred to the sessions, where they are tried by a recorder appointed by the British Government, who is constantly employed in making the circuit of the three settlements, remaining at each a sufficient time to transact his official business. Previous to their being brought into court, the criminal cases are placed before a grand jury, consisting chiefly of merchants, who pass or throw out the bills. The petit juries are composed of Europeans, Indo-British, and Armenians; personal respectability, and an acquaintance with the English language, being deemed sufficient qualifications.

The military force in the settlement consists of two or three companies of a Madras Native Infantry regiment and a small corps of artillery. The military and their followers amount altogether to between six and seven hundred. The troops of the line are quartered in cantonments, situated a mile and a-half from the town, and the artillery are stationed near the western point of the river's entrance, on which there is a small saluting battery. The settlement possesses no naval force,



with the exception of a small cruise prahu of ten tons burthen, which is rarely employed for any other purpose than to convey despatches to Malacca or Penang. A small schooner, employed by the government as a yacht, has, however, on several occasions been despatched on cruising expeditions against pirates, and may therefore be considered as part of the naval force of the settlements of the straits.

No port charges being imposed upon shipping, nor any duties laid upon the exports and imports of goods, the revenue of the government is derived chiefly from the ground-rents of land, and from duties levied on the retail of spirits, opium, pork, &c. ; but it will be seen by the following table of government receipts and disbursements, for the year 1835, that the revenue is inadequate to the expenditure :

#### RECEIPTS.

|                             |           |
|-----------------------------|-----------|
| Excise Farms .....          | £18,794*  |
| Mortgages and Transfers ... | 415       |
| Quit Rent of Lands .....    | 1,249     |
|                             | — £20,458 |

\* The amounts are given in sicca rupees, which I have reduced to English money at the rate of two shillings to the rupee.



Receipts, brought forward ... £20,458

*Judicial Department.*

|                                 |      |       |
|---------------------------------|------|-------|
| Fees of the Court of Judicature | £902 |       |
| Ditto ditto Requests            | 638  |       |
| Ditto ditto Magistrates         | 353  |       |
|                                 | —    | 1,893 |

*Post Office.*

|                                         |     |
|-----------------------------------------|-----|
| Amount collected for postage of Letters | 195 |
|-----------------------------------------|-----|

*General Department.*

|                                 |       |
|---------------------------------|-------|
| Amount of Fees for local Passes |       |
| to ships .....                  | 89    |
| Rent of house on Government     |       |
| Hill .....                      | 50    |
|                                 | — 139 |

*Profit and Loss.*

|                        |         |
|------------------------|---------|
| Premium on Bills ..... | 106     |
| Hire of Convicts ..... | 103     |
|                        | — 209   |
|                        | £22,894 |

DISBURSEMENTS.

*Revenue Department.*

|                                |       |
|--------------------------------|-------|
| Export and Import Office ..... | 275   |
| Land ditto .....               | 394   |
| Contingencies .....            | 30    |
|                                | — 699 |



Disbursements, brought forward ... £699

*Marine Department.*

|                                  |       |       |
|----------------------------------|-------|-------|
| Master Attendant's Office.....   | £432  |       |
| Government Schooner (one-third)* | 431   |       |
| Gun boat (one-third) .....       | 76    |       |
| Contingencies .....              | 269   |       |
|                                  | <hr/> | 1,208 |

*Military Department.*

|                            |       |     |
|----------------------------|-------|-----|
| Station Staff .....        | 172   |     |
| Signal Establishment ..... | 24    |     |
| Magazine .....             | 166   |     |
| Contingencies .....        | 547   |     |
|                            | <hr/> | 909 |

*Troops.*

|                                   |        |        |
|-----------------------------------|--------|--------|
| Pay and Provisions to the Troops, |        |        |
| and Provisions to the Convicts    | 11,979 |        |
| Expenses incurred .....           | 1,484  |        |
|                                   | <hr/>  | 13,463 |

*Post Office Department.*

|                     |       |     |
|---------------------|-------|-----|
| Clerk .....         | 111   |     |
| Contingencies ..... | 57    |     |
|                     | <hr/> | 168 |

*Judicial Department.*

|                                   |       |         |
|-----------------------------------|-------|---------|
| Recorder's Salary (one-third)...  | 1,263 |         |
| Officers of the Court, ditto..... | 1,300 |         |
|                                   | <hr/> |         |
| Carried forward                   | 2,563 |         |
|                                   | <hr/> | £16,457 |

\* Two-thirds of the Schooner's expenses, and of the Governor's and Recorder's salaries, are chargeable to Penang and Malacca.



Disbursements, brought forward ... £16,447

*Judicial Department, continued.*

|                                                              |       |       |
|--------------------------------------------------------------|-------|-------|
| Brought forward                                              | 2,563 |       |
| Sheriff's Salary .....                                       | 420   |       |
| Coroner's ditto .....                                        | 132   |       |
| Officers of the Police and Court<br>of Requests, ditto ..... | 1,075 |       |
| Rent of the Court House .....                                | 379   |       |
| Keeper of the Recorder's Chambers                            | 28    |       |
| Contingencies.....                                           | 1,117 |       |
|                                                              | —     | 5,717 |

*General Department.*

|                                     |       |        |
|-------------------------------------|-------|--------|
| Governor's Salary (one-third) ...   | 1,200 |        |
| Resident Councillor's ditto .....   | 2,477 |        |
| Assist.-Res. Councillor's ditto ... | 957   |        |
| Resident's Office Establishment     | 491   |        |
| Clerical Establishment .....        | 912   |        |
| Medical ditto.....                  | 531   |        |
| Convict ditto .....                 | 471   |        |
| Political Pensions .....            | 4,168 |        |
| Local ditto .....                   | 213   |        |
| Chinese Poor-house .....            | 911   |        |
| Contingencies .....                 | 1,580 |        |
|                                     | —     | 13,911 |

Total Disbursements £36,075

The Europeans settled at Singapore are apt to



censure the East-India Company for allowing the bridges and other public works to fall into decay, and for omitting to provide funds for the support of a flotilla; but it is scarcely to be expected that a mercantile company should possess sufficient public spirit, to induce it to incur a large annual expenditure for the support of a settlement, from which it derives no other benefit than that afforded by the consumption of the produce of its continental possessions in India. The advantages enjoyed by the Company amount to little or nothing when compared to those which have resulted to Great Britain, in consequence of the vast extent to which its manufactures have been imported to the straits, since the establishment of Singapore; and therefore it would appear that, in justice, it is to the British Government that the settlement should look for support. If Singapore were placed under the control of the latter, there can be no doubt that its condition would be greatly improved, for the protection from piracy it would afford to the native trader would give a new impetus to its commerce, while a more efficient police force would render it safe for Europeans to settle in the interior, for the purpose of forming plantations of the various articles of oriental produce, for the



growth of which the soil and climate are so well adapted.\*

Should any endeavour be made to fill up the deficiency in the revenue, by a duty on exports and imports, it would act as a very severe check on the commerce of the settlement. The Bugis, Chinese, and other native traders, do not land their goods for sale, but hold markets on board their junks and prahus during their stay in the port; and the traders established in the town go on board and purchase the goods which they require in small quantities, sometimes not exceeding in value four or five dollars. Under this system, no duty could be collected, and the native merchants who visit this port, would be obliged to pay it themselves, and hire houses on shore for the purpose

\* In the early part of 1836, it was notified to the merchants of Singapore, that a duty of two and a half per cent. would, in future, be levied on exports, in order to provide funds for the suppression of piracy; but the merchants petitioned the British Government to exert its authority to repeal the measure, as one fraught with destruction to the commercial prosperity of the settlement. They were joined in their appeal by the East-India Associations of London and Glasgow, and the result has been that the India Board has expressed its desire, that the Indian government should be directed "to suspend, if not already enacted, and to repeal, if enacted, the proposed imposts." Estimating the trade of Singapore at fourteen millions of dollars, this duty would have amounted annually to £82,500 sterling.



of containing their goods. The expense and inconvenience which this necessity would entail, would, in all probability, deter the native traders from visiting the port while so impolitic a system remained in force.

The commercial prosperity of Singapore is chiefly owing to the freedom which the natives enjoy from the annoyance and extortion of custom-house peons ; and when this freedom shall no longer exist, the trade of the Archipelago will return to its old channels, or, perhaps, will be centred in the neighbouring free Dutch port of Rhio.

Singapore, under the present system of free trade, will always be of paramount importance as a commercial emporium ; but still its agricultural capabilities should not be neglected. Being an insular possession, an European would feel greater confidence in devoting his time and capital to the cultivation of the soil, than if the settlement were on the main land : for should the British ever be driven out of continental India by a superior land-force, it is evident that their insular possessions will be retained as long as they can command a maritime supremacy.

There are no European planters in the island of Singapore ; nor is it probable that any British-born



subject will venture to engage in agricultural speculations, since the system of land tenures would destroy all confidence, and all hope of profit in the planter;\* while the present state of the settlement would render it unsafe for an European to dwell without the suburbs, as, in all probability, he would be robbed, and perhaps murdered, by armed bands of Chinese plunderers.†

Many of the Europeans at Singapore are, however, inclined to turn their attention to agriculture,‡ and there is no doubt that extensive cultivation would speedily follow the institution of a better system of land-regulations, and the establishment of a more efficient police force; since

\* Land is granted to individuals by the local government only on the following terms:—A quit-rent of one dollar per acre must be paid for the first ten years, progressively increasing until it amounts to four dollars per acre, at which it remains in perpetuity. Should the payment of the quit-rent be discontinued for a single year, the Government is at liberty to resume the land and all the buildings on it without any pecuniary consideration being allowed to the lessee.

† Soon after my final departure from Singapore, a body of Chinese attacked and plundered a house situated near the military cantonments, about a mile from the town, the residence of an English merchant, who was dangerously wounded, and left for dead by the robbers.

‡ In May 1835, an Agricultural Society was formed at Singapore, and I am glad to find that the names of all the most influential residents are enrolled in the list of members.



numbers of Chinese labourers, even to the amount of many thousands, are to be obtained with facility, and at a rate of wages which would render their labour at least one-third cheaper than slave labour in America.

Several of the merchants have small *amateur* plantations of spice-trees near their residences, but the cultivation of pepper, gambír, cotton, and sugar, would probably be found more profitable to the planter. The two former are already grown to some extent by the Chinese; but cotton, the cultivation of which is not well understood by them, is not yet produced in any quantity; and although there are many plantations of very excellent sugar-cane, sugar is not manufactured, the cane meeting with a ready sale among the Malays, who are extremely partial to it, and eat it, or rather suck its juice, without any previous preparation.

The pepper-vines, which are allowed to climb poles or small trees, are tolerably productive, and pepper planting is esteemed by the Chinese to be a very profitable speculation, particularly if they are enabled to evade the payment of quit-rent. The gambír plant, which somewhat resembles the myrtle, is generally cultivated in the same plantation with pepper, as the leaves and shoots, after



undergoing the process by which their juice is extracted, are found to be an excellent manure for the pepper-vines.

The leaves and young shoots of the gambír-plant are collected as soon as they have attained a sufficient size, and are boiled in iron pans until the juice acquires the consistence of treacle. The decoction is poured out into narrow troughs, dried, and afterwards cut up into small cakes, and packed in baskets for exportation. The gambír extract, which is of a yellowish-brown colour, and has the consistence of hard cheese, is much esteemed by the Malays for mixing with the preparation of betel, which they are in the habit of chewing; and considerable quantities have lately been exported to Great Britain, where it is used for dyeing cottons, and for tanning leather. The demand for gambír at home is on the increase; and, when better known to our chemists, it will probably be found applicable to many more purposes than those to which it is at present applied.

When the equalization of sugar duties which has lately taken place in favour of the produce of Bengal, shall be extended to that of the other British Asiatic possessions, much attention will doubtless be turned towards the cultivation and



manufacture of sugar in the island of Singapore, for, in addition to a favourable soil and cheapness of labour, the country is traversed by numerous small streams which would be found useful in turning the sugar mills. Abundance of wood could also be readily procured (even if the island itself were totally cleared,) for the supply of fuel for the boilers.

Large quantities of sago and of a sea-weed called *agar-agar* are exported from Singapore; but neither can be deemed the productions of the island, the former being brought to the settlement in its natural state and there manufactured, and the latter obtained from the rocks and reefs in the straits.

The pith of the sago-palm is imported from the neighbouring islands in Malay prahus, and its dirty state, when brought to the settlement, would scarcely lead one to suppose that pearl sago could be manufactured from such disgusting materials. There are several sago-manufactories on the banks of the Singapore river, a short distance above the town, which are owned and conducted solely by Chinese. The pith undergoes numberless washings in large wooden troughs; and, after being sufficiently cleared from dirt and fibres, it is strained through sieves into iron pans placed over



fires, when it receives the granulated and pearl-like appearance which the manufactured sago possesses.

Although sea-weed may appear to be a very insignificant article, yet the indefatigable Chinese, who must certainly believe that every natural production is intended for some useful purpose, collect it in large quantities for exportation to China, and it generally forms the half of the return cargoes taken by the Chinese junks. The *agar-agar* is collected in boats from the reefs on which it grows, and is well washed in the river, and afterwards dried, and packed in baskets. The weed, which is of a light yellow colour, grows in small bunches, the leaves, which are long and narrow, having the appearance of shreds. The finer portion of it is used in China for making a clear tasteless jelly ; but the bulk is boiled down into a firm and substantial glue, which is employed in the manufacture of furniture, lacquered-ware, &c. It is also used for making size to stiffen paper and silk. The price at Canton varies from £1 to £1. 15s. per hundred-weight, apparently a large sum, but it must be considered that, from its lightness, a considerable quantity is required to make up one hundred-weight, while its bulk renders the freight expensive.



The *bintang* tree, the timber of which much resembles red-pine, is sawed up into planks by the Chinese, and large quantities are exported to Java and other parts. This wood is easily cut, but it is not durable, and is, therefore, unadapted for ship-building. It is, however, well suited for ships' masts and yards. The teak tree does not exist on the island, nor is any wood to be found there, which, by possessing the quality of enduring well under water, will, in a measure, supply its place. *Merbo*, a tough, dark-coloured wood, is well adapted for making caps for mast-heads, but the timber is too short for the general purposes of ship-building.

Agriculture, however, at this settlement must be pronounced to be of minor importance, when compared with commerce, for it has been by means of the latter alone that Singapore has attained its present state of prosperity. If a colony attain consideration in the mother country according to the quantity of the manufactures produced by her which are consumed in it, this little settlement must certainly possess a strong claim to the support of Great Britain, for, although it has existed only a few years, it now imports British goods to the annual amount of more than £340,000



sterling,\* for which the home government has never incurred the slightest expense. A demand has been created since the establishment of the settlement of about two-thirds of the consumption, a vast increase in the brief period of its existence.

There are twenty European mercantile houses in Singapore, seventeen British, one Portuguese, one German, and one American : there are also three extensive Armenian mercantile establishments, and to these latter-named firms we are indebted for the re-opening of the trade with Borneo Proper. The British merchants are chiefly commission agents, who receive consignments of goods from merchants in Great Britain, and make returns in oriental produce purchased in the settlement. They rarely engage in commercial speculations with the islands in the Archipelago. The Europeans have very little direct commercial

\* The amount of goods imported from Great Britain into the chief British settlements in India, in the year 1832, was as follows :

|                                 |            |
|---------------------------------|------------|
| Bengal, Madras, and Bombay..... | £2,592,530 |
| Singapore .....                 | 340,799    |
| Ceylon .....                    | 47,792     |

I cannot readily obtain estimates of the trade of Penang and Malacca for the same year, but in 1829 the former imported from Great Britain to the amount of £16,767, and the latter to the amount of £10,166 sterling.



intercourse with the traders who visit the port, as their goods are purchased by the Chinese, who have a better acquaintance with the natives, and have patience enough to go into all the necessary details of bargaining and weighing the goods. When an European merchant wishes to make a shipment of produce to England, he visits the *bazaar*, and purchases the articles he requires from the Chinese, in exchange for others which have been consigned to him.

The mercantile navy belonging to the port of Singapore is very small, consisting only of a ship, the property of a British merchant, and several smaller vessels owned by Chinese, which are chiefly employed in collecting the produce of the east and west coasts of the Malay peninsula. When ships are required to convey goods to any part of the world, British free-traders which are waiting for cargoes, are always to be chartered for the purpose, but a larger number of country ships would tend greatly to increase the commerce of the place, as the commanders, in consequence of remaining constantly in the Archipelago, would acquire much useful knowledge concerning the countries to which they were bound, together with their productions ; and they would also be inte-



rested in obtaining information regarding places which are yet little known, and with which a lucrative commerce might be opened.

By the commercial reports it appears that the trade of Singapore is not on the increase: the opening of the trade between Great Britain and China has given a slight check to the commerce of the settlement; but as Great Britain has derived much benefit from its direct intercourse with China, the falling off at Singapore becomes of little consequence. The circumstance may indeed tend to increase our intercourse with the Indian Archipelago, for it was probably in a great measure owing to the decrease of the trade with China, that the merchants of Singapore and their connexions in Java turned their attention to the aggressions made by the Dutch on our commerce with their Indian ports; and the urgent appeal which they have transmitted home, may direct the regards of the British Government to the Indian Islands, the richest countries in the globe, which, though formerly estimated according to their merits, have lately been totally, and most unaccountably neglected.



The following STATEMENT of the EXPORTS and IMPORTS of the ISLAND of SINGAPORE, will show the extent of its Commerce with different Countries. The official year begins on the 1st of May: thus the year 1834-35 commences on the 1st May 1834, and terminates on the 30th of April 1835. The Spanish dollar is valued at four shillings and sixpence.

| COUNTRIES.                    | IMPORTS.  |           |           | EXPORTS.  |           |           |
|-------------------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
|                               | 1833-34.  | 1834-35.  | 1835-36.  | 1833-34.  | 1834-35.  | 1835-36.  |
|                               | Sp. Dls.  | Sp. Dls.  | Sp. Dls.  | Sp. Dls.  | Sp. Dls.  | Sp. Dls.  |
| Great Britain.....            | 1,446,488 | 1,207,162 |           | 3,428,132 | 1,352,457 |           |
| Foreign Europe.....           | 181,414   | 83,805    |           | 119,782   | 123,627   |           |
| Mauritius, &c. ....           | 990       | 100       |           | 12,166    | 3,443     |           |
| Calcutta.....                 | 1,265,441 | 1,071,355 |           | 944,358   | 945,677   |           |
| Madras .....                  | 370,550   | 236,154   |           | 167,002   | 216,632   |           |
| Bombay .....                  | 138,088   | 101,224   |           | 206,207   | 202,408   |           |
| Arabia .....                  | 2,576     | 3,365     |           | 58,990    | 50,747    |           |
| Manilla .....                 | 252,261   | 170,481   |           | 261,479   | 469,573   |           |
| Ceylon .....                  | 19,625    | 55,141    |           | 12,835    | 5,574     |           |
| China.....                    | 1,796,586 | 766,956   |           | 1,014,000 | 1,213,695 |           |
| Java .....                    | 923,453   | 1,056,663 |           | 714,509   | 630,931   |           |
| Rhio .....                    | 127,724   | 133,680   |           | 127,641   | 124,717   |           |
| Siam .....                    | 142,604   | 243,283   |           | 198,182   | 163,025   |           |
| Cochin China .....            | 58,105    | 107,324   |           | 77,164    | 78,380    |           |
| Sumatra .....                 | 176,682   | 200,594   |           | 206,644   | 203,788   |           |
| East Coast of Malay peninsula | 381,528   | 295,472   |           | 392,668   | 249,668   |           |
| West Coast of ditto           | 45,688    | 19,619    |           | 34,805    | 11,813    |           |
| Celebes .....                 | 225,575   | 237,974   |           | 223,673   | 178,290   |           |
| Borneo .....                  | 272,391   | 284,824   |           | 260,977   | 233,361   |           |
| Bali .....                    | 90,576    | 80,675    |           | 118,826   | 91,747    |           |
| Neighbouring islands .....    | 107,950   | 103,585   |           | 91,861    | 186,298   |           |
| TOTAL ..                      | 8,086,275 | 6,459,336 | 6,618,671 | 8,671,896 | 6,735,851 | 6,217,703 |

Total Amount of the Exports and Imports of Singapore in { 1833-34 } Sp. Dls. { 16,758,171  
 { 1834-35 } { 13,195,187  
 { 1835-36 } { 12,836,374



STATEMENT of the NUMBER and TONNAGE of VESSELS which have Imported and Exported Goods at SINGAPORE, in the years, 1833-34, 1834-35, 1835-36.

| DESCRIPTION OF VESSELS.                                          | IMPORTED. |          |          |          |          |          |
|------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
|                                                                  | 1833-34.  |          | 1834-35. |          | 1835-36. |          |
|                                                                  | No.       | Tonnage. | No.      | Tonnage. | No.      | Tonnage. |
| Square-rigged vessels, (ships, brigs, and }<br>schooners ..... } | 475       | 137,298  | 517      | 156,518  | 539      | 166,053  |
| Native prahus and junks, &c. ....                                | 1,599     | 34,927   | 1,484    | 37,521   | 1,444    | 36,346   |
| 2                                                                |           |          |          |          |          |          |
| E                                                                |           |          |          |          |          |          |
| 2                                                                |           |          |          |          |          |          |
| DESCRIPTION OF VESSELS.                                          | EXPORTED. |          |          |          |          |          |
|                                                                  | 1833-34.  |          | 1834-35. |          | 1835-36. |          |
|                                                                  | No.       | Tonnage. | No.      | Tonnage. | No.      | Tonnage. |
| Square-rigged vessels, (ships, brigs, and }<br>schooners ..... } | 474       | 136,349  | 515      | 155,471  | 533      | 165,417  |
| Native prahus and junks, &c. ....                                | 1,480     | 39,877   | 1,418    | 35,658   | 1,399    | 34,932   |







## APPENDIX.

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### OBSERVATIONS ON THE COMMERCIAL RESOURCES OF THE INDIAN ARCHIPELAGO.

A perusal of the preceding chapters will have made it evident to the reader, that few parts of the world present a fairer field for British mercantile enterprise than the islands of the Indian Archipelago: for not only are they exceedingly rich in raw produce of the most valuable description, but the natives, being expensive in their tastes, and passionately addicted to commercial pursuits, have always displayed the greatest readiness to exchange this produce for the manufactures of a more civilized country, whenever an opportunity has been afforded them of so doing. Nevertheless, our commercial interests have in no place sustained such deplorable neglect. Pirates have been allowed to swarm in the immediate neighbourhood of the only settlement which we possess in these seas, and a rival European power has been suffered to commit repeated aggressions on our commerce with impunity; so that, had not the strong desire to obtain British manufactures, displayed by the natives themselves, induced them to overcome the abovementioned, and many other obstacles which have been thrown in their way, our intercourse with the Eastern Islands must, ere this, have totally ceased.



Previous to the year 1812, a commercial intercourse was carried on with the Archipelago by British mercantile adventurers from Bengal and Penang, who traded to the principal native ports; but as they had to trust to their own strength alone for protection, the enormous profits on the sale of their goods were often insufficient to repay the great expense incurred, the necessary regard for their own safety obliging them to man and arm their vessels on a scale more suited to ships of war than to private merchantmen. When the Dutch oriental possessions fell into our hands, during the late war, the property of British traders became more secure, and the liberal system adopted by the local government caused Batavia to become the commercial emporium of the Further East, and, in consequence, British manufactures were introduced into the islands in considerable quantities. This traffic, which proved exceedingly lucrative to all the parties concerned, and which soon became of immense advantage to Great Britain, existed only during a few short years; for when these countries were again restored to the Dutch, the system of monopoly was resumed in all its rigour. British manufactures, however, still continued to be introduced in the independent states by private traders, but these being totally unprotected by Government, this inefficient system proved too insecure to be persisted in, and it became evident that, without some effort on the part of the British, the Dutch would soon succeed in entirely closing the Archipelago against us. At this crisis the settlement of Singapore was established, and, under the fostering care of its founder, its commerce increased with a rapidity almost unprecedented; but soon after the death of this public-spirited individual, the neglect which was shewn to our commercial interests in the Archipelago checked its further progress, and the trade of Singapore fell off with a



rapidity almost equal to that of its sudden increase. The commerce of the settlement attained its highest state of prosperity in 1829. The export and import trade during that year amounted to £4,442,000; but for the year ending in April 1836, the trade amounted only to £2,888,000, and unless some attention should be turned towards this important branch of our commerce, it bids fair to be totally annihilated. According to the ratio of increase for three or four years preceding 1829; the trade of Singapore in 1836 should have *increased* at least five millions sterling, instead of having *decreased* a million and a half.\* This falling off of our trade with the Archipelago may readily be traced to the unwarrantable impositions and restrictions of the Dutch, to the rapid advances of the Americans, to the prevalence of piracy, and to the frequent occurrence of political commotions in the native states.†

The aggressions of the Dutch on our commerce in the East has not been the least injurious of these drawbacks, since the exorbitant amount of duties imposed on British manufactures, imported into their oriental possessions, act almost as a prohibition. By the treaty which now exists between the British and Dutch, which was concluded in 1824, the two governments mutually agreed to admit each other's manufactures into their respective settlements in India, at a rate of duty not exceeding double that charged

\* A direct trade is carried on between Great Britain and the Dutch and Spanish settlements of Batavia and Manilla, but owing to the amount of duties imposed on our manufactures, the quantity imported has been restricted to the consumption of those countries alone: with these two exceptions, our commerce with the Archipelago is carried on entirely through the medium of Singapore. The trade of Singapore and our commerce with the Archipelago, therefore, we may consider to be synonymous.

† The commerce of Singapore has also been injured in some degree by the opening of the trade with China in 1834.



for the manufactures of the country to which the settlement belonged; and where the products of the latter were admitted free of duty, the amount to be charged for the manufactures of the foreign country was not to exceed six per cent. on their value. The conditions of the treaty have never been fulfilled on the part of the Dutch, for while it was yet pending, the Governor-general of Dutch India imposed an *ad valorem* duty of twenty-five per cent. on foreign cottons and woollens imported into the Dutch possessions from countries to the westward of the Cape of Good Hope, and thirty-five per cent. on all such goods imported from countries to the eastward of the same, while Dutch manufactures were at the same time to be admitted free of duty. When the copy of the treaty was received by the Batavian government, no alterations were made in the above arrangements; indeed the duties on British Goods have since been virtually increased: for they were originally valued by two merchants, one Dutch and the other British, but for several years past the valuation has been made at the custom-house, where thirty per cent. is added to the invoice. The goods therefore pay the enormous duty of fifty-five per cent., while the duty which should legally be charged amounts only to six per cent.\*

\* These infractions of the treaty have not, however, passed entirely without notice on the part of the British, for the former Melbourne ministry made strong remonstrances on the subject to the Dutch government. The ministry retired from office before any arrangements had been made, and as their successors apparently paid no attention to the subject, the Dutch were encouraged to persevere, and even to increase the already exorbitant amount of the duties.

By late accounts from Batavia it appears that, owing to the renewed representations on the part of the British government, a duty of twelve and a-half per cent. will be imposed on Dutch cottons and woollens, from the 1st of June 1836, while that on foreign goods of the same description will remain the same as before, twenty-five per cent. The Singapore Journalists, however, assert that an arrangement has been made with the Netherlands'



Had the aggressions of the Dutch been confined to the imposition of prohibitory duties on our manufactures in their own colonies, there would have been some slight palliation for the offence; but they have not hesitated to exert their influence in ruining the commercial prosperity of those countries over which by right they have no control, and in which the bravery of the inhabitants has prevented these ruthless devastators from gaining a footing. Possessing a maritime force far superior to that of any of the native states, they are in the constant habit of destroying the commerce of the countries which they cannot conquer, and although this has been effected to the manifest injury of our own trade, the system has most unaccountably been allowed to prevail without the slightest remonstrance on the part of the British.

The present state of the extensive Chinese colony on the western coast of Borneo, an account of which has already been given, will afford a correct example of the system pursued. The Dutch have there cut us off from all commer-

Trading Society, the chief, indeed almost the sole importer of Dutch manufactures, by means of which the Trading Society will receive back the amount of the duties paid by them.

The want of principle displayed by the Dutch government throughout the transaction, would lead to the supposition that there is some ground for the assertion, otherwise it would be difficult to account for the readiness with which the Dutch have complied with the provisions of the treaty, which they have hitherto evaded with the most determined obstinacy. It would, of course, be just as easy to value Dutch goods at the custom-house of Batavia, at thirty per cent. below the invoice price, as to value British goods at thirty per cent. above it.

The overcharge of duties on British goods imported into Java since the year 1824, which the Dutch will doubtless be forced to disgorge, amounts to upwards of one million sterling, but the payment of ten times that sum would scarcely reimburse Great Britain for the injury her commerce has sustained, by the stoppage in the consumption of her manufactures caused by the exorbitant amount of the duties.



cial intercourse with a numerous and industrious people inhabiting the richest part of the richest island in the world, while they have no more right to blockade its coasts than they would have to blockade the settlement of Singapore itself. Were the obstacles to a commercial intercourse between these Chinese and our settlement of Singapore removed, the trade must amount, in the first year, to at least a million of dollars; and it would progressively increase to an indefinite extent. Very slight exertions on the part of the British government would be sufficient to effect this most desirable object, for were the Dutch authorities at Batavia merely informed that any future attempt on their part to prevent a commercial intercourse between the Chinese colony and Singapore would be resented as an act of hostility, so well aware are they of the dishonesty of the transaction, that the iniquitous system would be discontinued.

The commercial rivalry of the Americans, however, is very different in its nature from that of the Dutch, and is carried on in a spirit worthy of an enterprising nation. As their commerce receives the greatest attention from their government, their rapid advances in the Archipelago may be easily accounted for. A political agent\* is constantly employed in visiting the various countries in Asia, and in making arrangements by which their merchants can carry on a traffic both with credit and advantage. The most insignificant native ports which are resorted to by the American merchant ships are also frequently visited by their vessels of war, and any insult or aggression offered to American citizens is immediately resented. At the same

\* Mr. Roberts, the gentleman whom I met with at Siam, in the U. S. ship *Peacock*, was employed in this capacity. During my stay he concluded a most advantageous treaty with the king of that country. See the chapter on Siam.



time the British flag is absolutely unprotected, and the merchants of Singapore are therefore deterred from carrying on trading speculations with the native ports. The consequence is, that the trade of those independent countries in the Archipelago which are so distant from Singapore that the natives are unable to bring their goods to that port in their own vessels, is now chiefly in the hands of the Americans. The west coast of Sumatra, for example, was formerly much resorted to by the British traders, but now, although numbers of American vessels annually visit the coast, only a solitary English ship is now and then to be met with at the northern pepper ports.\*

The Americans have laboured under great disadvantages in the Archipelago, from their possessing no settlements by which they could acquire a political influence, and from their having no manufactures of their own adapted to the market. The exertions of their government, however, have sufficed to counterbalance all these adverse circumstances,

\* By recent accounts from Singapore, it appears that the betel-nut trade which has hitherto been carried on by the British with the north-east coast of Sumatra, also bids fair to be totally annihilated. The commander and officers of the British brig *Zoroaster* have been murdered by the crew near Acheen, the king of which place afforded protection and encouragement to the mutineers. The East-India Company's schooner *Zephyr* was sent to demand the offenders, but the king of Acheen refused to deliver them up; and while the Company's schooner was there, a vessel belonging to the king actually fired into an English trader which was at anchor close to her. A few days after this circumstance, the British ship *Hamoody* was attacked and plundered by the Rajah Muda, or heir apparent of Acheen, who declared that he would treat every British vessel that he met with in like manner. These cases are selected as being of recent occurrence; a retrospective glance at the Straits' Journals will shew how many of a similar nature have taken place within the last two or three years. The conduct of the Americans at Qualla Battu, on the west coast of Sumatra, would lead us to conclude that, had the *Hamoody* been an American ship, the king of Acheen would, ere this, have made ample amends, or his city would have been reduced to ashes.



and it must therefore be evident that, were equal attention bestowed by the British government on matters concerning the promotion of the welfare of British merchants, the latter would be enabled to trade with security, while the possession of manufactures in great demand, and a convenient settlement of our own at Singapore, would of necessity cause our commerce with the Archipelago to increase in a much greater ratio than that of the Americans.

The political commotions which so frequently occur in the independent native states, entail the greatest possible misery on the natives themselves, and are evidently exceedingly injurious, not only to the commerce of the countries in which they take place, but to that of every other in the neighbourhood. Having no superior power to which they can appeal for a disinterested arbitration of their disputes, the chiefs are in the habit of deciding their differences by the sword: the weaker party is driven out, and forced to resort to piracy as a means of subsistence; were they to apply to the Dutch as arbitrators, the application would probably be followed by the infliction of a ruinous commercial treaty; and the British authorities in the Straits of Malacca are too much occupied by the affairs of the settlements under their jurisdiction, to devote much attention to other matters.

As I have before stated, it can scarcely be expected that the East India Company, which already sustains a considerable annual loss in maintaining these settlements, can go to any further expense in extending a commerce from which it derives no benefit. The British government must therefore be looked to for assistance; and as the peace of the native states might be restored, and continued without either much trouble or much expense, it is to be hoped that some efforts may soon be directed towards the attainment of so desirable



an object. Even were the interposition of the British to be attended with no beneficial results to our commerce, still, as an act of humanity, some attempt should be made to put a stop to the disorders which are desolating the fairest countries in the globe. By the British alone can this be effected, since no other powerful nation possesses the confidence of the natives. The earnest desire that the native chiefs entertain for the arbitration of the British in their disputes, is evinced by the frequent references made by the chiefs of the Malay states in the Straits of Malacca to the governors of Penang, &c. and when these have been attended to, the most beneficial results have followed.

The establishment of factories at the chief native ports, a plan which I have heard advocated on several occasions, would be decidedly an impolitic measure, as it would rouse the jealousy of the natives, while a great expense would most unnecessarily be incurred. The appointment of a single commissioner, who, possessing conciliating manners, a knowledge of the Malay language, and withal an interest in the subject, would gain the confidence and respect of the natives, and who might be employed in periodical visits to the native ports, would answer every purpose. No expense would be incurred by the government beyond the bare salary of the commissioner, as the British vessels of war on the Indian station, one of which is generally to be found at anchor in the harbour of Singapore, might be employed in conveying him to the various spots where his presence might be required. The peace and unity which this system would establish in the native states, would not only allow the inhabitants to turn greater attention to agriculture and commerce, but would also induce the industrious Chinese, who are now prevented by a dread of being plundered, to settle in them and improve their resources.



Even were no commissioner to be appointed, the native ports should now and then be visited by British vessels of war, were it merely to prove to the inhabitants that the reports which they may have heard respecting the possession by the British of a maritime force were really not groundless.

The foregoing remarks apply chiefly to the *western* part of the Archipelago, for with the eastern portion, comprising the extensive and highly fertile islands of Gilolo, Ceram, Buru, New Guinea, Arru, &c. strange and unaccountable as it may appear, the British have *no* commercial intercourse. These islands have all suffered greatly from the monopolies of the Dutch, and the inhabitants of some of the smaller ones, Lontar for example, have been exterminated on account of the resistance which they made to the detestable tyranny of their oppressors. The larger islands, however, have never been reduced to subjection, though the Dutch, when their power was at its zenith, were enabled, with the aid of their maritime force, effectually to repress any attempts at independent commerce on the part of the natives. Since the period alluded to a very considerable change has taken place in the political position of the Dutch in this part of the world. Their system has worked its own ruin: their settlements in the Molucca and Spice Islands have dwindled into insignificance;\* their revenues

\* The Dutch have at the present time seven settlements in the eastern part of the Archipelago. Macassar, on the south end, and Monado, on the north-east end of Celebes; Ternate, in the Moluccas; Amboyna and Banda, in the Spice Islands; Bimah, on the north coast of Sumbawa; and Coepang, on the south end of Timor. The Portuguese have a settlement at Diely, on the north-west coast of Timor. The remainder of the Dutch settlements, in the Archipelago, are the Island of Java; Palembang, Bencoolen, and Padang, in Sumatra; Banjar Massin, Sambas, and Poutianak, in Borneo; Rhio, near Singapore; and Minto, on the Island of Banka. These, with Singapore, and the Spanish settlements on the Philippines, form the sum total of European establishments in the Archipelago.



being inadequate even to the small public expenditure incurred; and these, like all the settlements of the Dutch in India, with the exception perhaps of Java, must long ere this have been abandoned, were they not supported by money raised by loan in London. The government, from want of funds, is now unable to retain a sufficient number of cruizers to keep the natives of the independent islands in a desirable state of misery and degradation: their commercial spirit, which is much greater than that of the Malays, is therefore now coming into play, circumstances which might be of great advantage to the British, who are certainly indebted to their own neglect and indifference, for not having yet partaken of the benefits which offered themselves long ago. It cannot be doubted that a very lucrative and extensive traffic might be carried on with these islands, since they are annually visited by fifteen or sixteen American traders, chiefly for the purpose of obtaining articles for the Canton market, in exchange for American goods. Their profits must be enormous,\* otherwise the delay caused by trading from village to village must ruin their speculations.

British cottons are highly prized by the natives of these islands, but, from their great distance from Singapore, they can only obtain them through the medium of the Dutch settlement of Macassar, on the south coast of Celebes, to which place they resort to obtain them from those natives of Macassar who trade to Singapore, in exchange for the produce of their own countries.† Considerable quantities

\* I was informed by the master of an American brig, that at an island in this part of the Archipelago, which he did not choose to particularize, he was in the habit of receiving six cakes of bees-wax, each a foot thick, and three feet in diameter, in exchange for a single musket.

† The following quotations of the cost prices at Singapore, of some of the principal articles procured from the easternmost islands, are extracted from



of British cottons were formerly thus disposed of, but the Dutch, from having been suffered to commit repeated aggressions on our commerce with impunity, have been encouraged to make an effort to prevent the introduction of British manufactures at Macassar. According to the provisions of the treaty of 1824, a duty of six per cent. only should have been imposed on British goods imported in that place, but thirty-five per cent. has been charged until 1834, in which year it was increased to seventy per cent. This, however, did not, as was expected, put an entire stop to the introduction of our manufactures, so that the following year the direct importation of British goods from Singapore was *prohibited*. Even were these infamous restrictions removed, the commerce between Singapore and the easternmost islands, by way of Macassar, could not be greatly extended, the natives not being inclined to visit Dutch settlements, never resorting to such a medium if they can obtain what they require through other channels; while the number of hands through which the goods must necessarily pass renders the retail price enormous. Neither is it to be

the *Singapore Chronicle* of May 21st, 1836. The picul is 133½lbs., and the Spanish dollar is valued at 4s. 6d.

| Articles.                    | Prices in Spanish Dollars. | Remarks.           |
|------------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------|
| Bees'-wax ..... per picul    | 25 to 27                   | Scarce and wanted. |
| Beech de Mar (trepan)        |                            |                    |
| first sort ..... do.         | 30 to 50                   | Demand by Junks.   |
| Ditto, inferior ..... do.    | 2½ to 15                   | Do.                |
| Birds'-nests, white .... do. | 2,000 to 3,000             | Do.                |
| Do. black .... do.           | 40 to 150                  | Do.                |
| Buffalo Hides ..... do.      | 3 to 3½                    | Dull.              |
| Mother-o'-Pearl Shells.. do. | 7 to 10                    | Saleable.          |
| Sapan Wood ..... do.         | 1½ to 2¼                   | Plentiful.         |
| Sandal Wood (Timor).. do.    | 12 to 14                   |                    |
| Nutmegs ..... do.            | 100 to 120                 | In demand—none.    |
| Mace ..... do.               | 110 to 130                 | Do. do.            |
| Cloves ..... do.             | 25 to 27                   | Saleable—none.     |
| Tortoiseshell..... do        | 700 to 1,000               | None.              |



expected, in consequence of the reasons previously stated, that, in the present state of affairs, successful commerce can be carried on with these islands by British traders, who must be protected by the home government before they can derive any advantage from their spirit or enterprise.

The importance of Singapore as a commercial emporium, points out the means by which our commerce can most readily be extended in this part of the world, and there can be no doubt that a settlement of the same description in the eastern part of the Archipelago, must soon become equally beneficial to Great Britain. It is indeed the only method by which a permanent and regular intercourse can be established with these countries, for, owing to the system hitherto pursued by the Dutch, there is at present no native state sufficiently powerful to afford such ample protection to the traders, as to render its ports extensive commercial depôts for foreign commerce.

The north coast of Australia, about the 132d degree of east longitude, naturally presents itself as the spot best adapted for a commercial emporium, being situated immediately to the southward of the largest and richest islands in the eastern portion of the Archipelago ; and as the monsoons blow east and west, voyages to and from these islands might be made with great facility at all times in the year. The readiness with which a commercial emporium might be called into existence in this part of the Archipelago, can be proved by the present condition of the Arru islands, a groupe situated about two hundred and fifty miles from the north coast of Australia. These islands not being supposed to possess spice trees, and the inhabitants being warlike and powerful, have been comparatively unmolested by the Dutch, and consequently, the natural desire for improvement manifested by the natives has not been retarded



by a power which has shewn itself to be inimical to the advancement of mankind in knowledge and happiness, and which has exercised a very detrimental influence over every portion of the East, that has been so unfortunate as to be in any way subjected to its jurisdiction. The Arru islands thus happily escaping the disastrous results of a system calculated to destroy mental energy, and to prevent the progress of civilisation, are now in a tolerable state of cultivation, while the neighbouring island of Ceram, with several others in the vicinity, in which the spirit of the natives has been broken by the grievous oppression of the Dutch, are dependent on their more fortunate neighbours for their supplies of provisions. In all the countries belonging to the Archipelago, in which the natives entertain a strong predilection for agricultural employments, the government is found to be more substantial than in states in which the natives abandon themselves to maritime adventure; and in places in which the government is supported on a firm basis, traders are likely to receive a greater degree of protection than in countries where confusion and anarchy prevail. The Arru islands, in consequence of the circumstances above-stated, possess in some degree the advantages which lead to wealth and improvement, and though their chiefs are not very powerful, still they are more so than those of the neighbouring islands. The Arru groupe have, in consequence, become the emporium of the south-eastern corner of the Archipelago. The rich produce of the east coast of New Guinea, of Ceram, Goram, and Ceram Lant, and also of the islands to the north and north-east of Timor, being collected there; and four or five square-rigged vessels belonging to British and Chinese merchants of Java, with many Bugis prahus from Macassar, annually resort to these islands to obtain the above-named produce in exchange for the manu-



factures of Europe and continental India. The Dutch settlements on Amboyna, Banda, and Timor, are equally well situated for commercial emporiums as the Arrus, but the natives hate the Dutch, and therefore avoid as much as possible having any intercourse with them.

An European settlement on the north coast of Australia (properly conducted, it must be understood) would become the commercial emporium of this part of the Archipelago, as Singapore became that of the western part, since the government would be much more substantial than in any of the native states. The natives of the Arrus would not be losers by the transfer of the trade, as many articles found there, which are now comparatively useless, would become of great value. The pearl banks, for example, which stretch from the islands towards New Guinea, are more extensive, and, on account of their not having been much disturbed, far more productive than any to be found in the East; but the shells, (which, by the way, are more valuable as an article of commerce than the pearls themselves) are suffered to lie in the places in which they have been opened, as the traders are enabled to fill up their vessels with less bulky articles, which are found to be of superior value. A more extensive market would also be opened for their agricultural products.\*

The immense advantages Great Britain would derive from a mart in this part of the world, which would afford a large consumption for her manufactures, particularly at the present time, are too obvious to require comment. Our extra-tropical

\* As may be expected, several Chinese are established in the Arrus. One individual is engaged in building prahus with the valuable timber which is found on the islands, the natives themselves being very good carpenters. I met a Chinese at Singapore, in 1834, who had recently arrived from the Arrus, and the information I was enabled to obtain from him, and also from others who had visited these almost unknown islands, I have embodied in a paper, which was read before the Geographical Society in March 1837.



Australian colonies would also derive much benefit from it. The demand in New South Wales and Van Diemen's Land for China produce, particularly tea, is very great; but these colonies produce nothing (with the exception of seal skins, which cannot now be obtained in any quantity) that is adapted to the China market: the tea required for the consumption of the colonies is therefore purchased with cash, and there is consequently a constant draining of specie. The eastern part of the Indian Archipelago, and the north coast of Australia,\* produce many articles in abundance which are adapted only to the China market, such as trepang, edible birds' nests, sandal wood, &c. but the natives prefer receiving European manufactures in exchange for them. Thus the Americans carry their manufactures to this part of the Archipelago, and exchange them there for the above-mentioned articles, the Chinese being anxious to obtain the latter, while they have no use for the former. Here, then, will be found the basis of a traffic which cannot fail to be highly advantageous to all the parties concerned. The merchants of Sydney would receive from Great Britain, in exchange for their wool and oil, manufactured goods suited to the tastes of the natives of the Archipelago: these would be taken to the emporium on the north coast of Australia, and exchanged for the produce which would be collected there; and this again would be carried to China, and there exchanged for articles required for the consumption of New South Wales. The traffic would be complicated, and therefore the more lucrative; for it is reasonable to expect that a profit would be obtained at each exchange. That the trade is profitable at the present time, there can be no doubt; otherwise the Americans would not resort to

\* Upwards of a thousand Bugis from Macassar annually visit the north coast of Australia in their prahus, to obtain trepang, or sea-slug, and tortoiseshell.



the Archipelago year after year, nor would the Bugis traders be enabled to support the expense which a long sojourn among the islands with small vessels and large crews necessarily entails.

A settlement on the north coast of Australia would be of such vast importance to this country, that I am induced to go further than I originally intended, and to touch on its agricultural capabilities. The soil and climate of the country about Raffles' Bay, the only part with which we are well acquainted, is evidently well adapted to the growth of cotton, coffee, and pepper, particularly to the former; indeed both soil and climate bear a remarkable resemblance to that of the districts of the United States, which produce cotton of the best staple.\* At present Great Britain derives four-fifths of the cotton consumed in her manufactories from the United States of America; yet so late as the year 1784, an American vessel arrived at Liverpool having a few bales of cotton on board, which were seized in the belief that cotton was not produced in that part of the world. In 1832, the quantity of cotton-wool imported into Great Britain from America exceeded 228,000,000lbs. This immense increase in so short a period, is to be attributed to the planter being enabled to obtain abundance of waste land on moderate terms, and to cultivate it by means of cheap and combined labour. Now a cotton planter on the north coast of Australia would possess these advantages, even in a greater degree than a cultivator in the United States; for the latter, after having purchased his land from the government, is obliged to lay out a large sum of money in the purchase of slaves.

\* The best cotton produced in the Indian Archipelago is that of the Island of Bali, the staple of which, to judge from the cloth manufactured from it, must be excellent. A richer soil is not suited to the growth of cotton: since it causes the plants to exhaust themselves in wood and leaf.



The former, however, could obtain Chinese labourers in any numbers, without any other outlay than a few dollars each, the amount of their passage-money from China; and even this small outlay would only be necessary during the early infancy of the settlement, for, as the case stands at Singapore at the present time, thousands would come there of their own accord as soon as they learned that there would be employment for them. Regarding the question merely in a pecuniary point of view, Chinese labour is much to be preferred to that of negro slaves: a Chinese is more skilful, and will get through more work than a negro; and it has been well ascertained that the wages and provisions required for a Chinese labourer at Singapore, amount to at least one-third less than the expenses of a slave in the United States, calculating the amount of his clothing and provisions, and the interest on his purchase-money at five per cent. I have alluded to China as the main source whence labourers might be obtained, as emigration is more prevalent there at the present time than in any other country in India, but many of the islands in the Archipelago, Java in particular, would also afford numbers of labourers, who would probably be preferred by those European planters, who, from having resided among them, would be well acquainted with their habits.

Cheap land and cheap labour must soon attract European skill and capital to the settlement: for in Java, notwithstanding the enterprise-suppressing nature of the Dutch policy, a large amount of British capital, and a considerable number of British planters, are employed in the cultivation of those articles not prohibited by the government. From India itself a considerable number of capitalists would, doubtless, arrive in the settlement as planters; men who would be well acquainted with the mode of culture suited



to tropical climates. Those who have visited the British possessions in India must be aware that many of our countrymen are to be found there, who, after years of toil, have been unable to acquire, by commercial pursuits, sufficient means to allow them to return with their families to England, who will not employ themselves in agriculture in India, from want of confidence in the stability of the government, the European population being so small when compared with the natives, that they feel convinced that whenever the latter combine their strength they must become masters, in which case they or their descendants would, probably, be reduced to beggary. Many, therefore, who give up all hopes of returning to England, emigrate to our Australian colonies, and in Western Australia alone are several retired merchants and military and naval officers from India. The Cocos, or keeling islands, a small detached group in the midst of the Indian ocean, is settled by a party of British from India, and very recently a considerable number of others have sailed from Calcutta to colonize the Chagos Archipelago, another group in the Indian Ocean, about midway between the Mauritius and Ceylon. Had there been a settlement on the north coast of Australia, which is near the same parallel of latitude as both these groups, and at least equals them in point of climate,\* these individuals would, in all probability, have

\* As Raffles' Bay, on the north coast of Australia, was occupied during the years 1828 and 1829 by a British military force, we are enabled to obtain satisfactory information concerning its soil and climate. Dr. Wilson's "Voyage round the World," a work recently published, contains an account of this part from personal observation, and from it I extract the following observations on its climate. The first is the opinion of Captain Laws of H. M. S. *Satellite*, who visited Raffles' Bay in 1825 :—

" At Raffles' Bay there have been only three deaths since the formation of the settlement, the first of which was the surgeon. The circumstance



preferred going there ; but as individuals, without the protection of government, they could not have done so with safety, as the property of the little party might have attracted the cupidity of the pirates who are to be met with in every part of the Archipelago ; and were they fortunate enough to escape a visit from these marauders, they would doubtless have been turned out by their neighbours, the Dutch.\*

left them without medical assistance for nearly seven months, during which period the other two died, an infant and a convict (disease unknown).

“ Now, looking at the number of deaths, and considering that every individual at both settlements are natives of Great Britain or Ireland ; and that none of the officers, and not more than six of the men, had ever resided within the tropics before, a tolerable estimate may be formed of the climate, which I do not hesitate to say is one of the best within the torrid zone ; indeed, the difference we felt between it and India was surprising. We had no instance of sickness during our stay in these seas, though I am convinced, had our people been as much exposed in wooding, in watering, in any part of either the East or West Indies, we should have had many cases of fever, if not of death.”

Dr. Wilson's own observations tend to confirm the above.

“ As far as my own observations and experience go, I perfectly coincide in opinion, as to the healthiness of the climate. I was accustomed to use a great deal of exercise, even in the middle of the day, which would have been extremely hazardous in India. When Captain Laws, Captain Barker, and myself, took an excursion to Croker's Island, we were occasionally up to the middle in water, and exposed for hours to the influence of an unclouded tropical sun. We rested during the night in an open boat, subjected to the nocturnal dews, and the greatest part of the next day we were again exposed to the sun ; yet none of us felt the slightest ill effects from the expedition.

“ Had we acted in the same manner in some of the other tropical climates, we should not, in all probability, have lived forty-eight hours longer.”

\* Soon after the Cocos were settled, a ship of war was on two occasions despatched from Batavia to take possession of them, but, fortunately for the settlers, it returned each time without succeeding in finding the islands. This little settlement, which is now highly prosperous, has been the means of saving many lives and much valuable property, and has several times afforded refuge to vessels in distress. British ships of war, passing between New South Wales and India, generally touch there for refreshments.



Torres Straits must become more frequented, as our colonies in New South Wales and Van Diemen's Land increase; and as the most accurate surveys will be insufficient entirely to remove the dangers attending their navigation, a settlement on the north coast of Australia would be a port of refuge for disabled ships, and serve also for an asylum for the crews of those vessels which might be totally lost; while at the same time the barbarous natives of the islands in the Straits would be deterred from murdering the shipwrecked mariners who might be thrown upon their shores. The late unfortunate loss of the *Charles Eaton*, and the murder of the crew, shows how severely the want of such a settlement may be felt; and while vast sums are expended by the country in settlements in Western Africa for the suppression of the slave trade, surely a tithe of the amount might be expended in an endeavour to preserve the lives of our seamen, were that the only inducement.

The commercial and agricultural capabilities of the north coast of Australia are so obvious, that they must, ere long, attract the attention of some European nation;\* but by none could they be turned to so great an advantage as by the British, particularly as a settlement on these shores would form a post of communication between our oriental possessions and our rapidly increasing colonies in New South Wales.†

\* The efforts of the French to colonize North Africa are now beginning to cool, and therefore it is not improbable that they may turn their attention to this part of the world, where they would have no warlike tribes to oppose them. Prompt measures enabled us to anticipate their intentions to settle at King George's Sound and at Swan River, neither of which places would have been taken possession of at the time, had not the French been fitting out vessels for the same purpose. We should be unable to shut them out in the same manner from the North coast, which possesses so many secure harbours, that, were they forestalled in one, they might fix themselves in another.

† The opinions given above are not hastily formed, the great importance of the North coast of Australia having attracted my attention immediately after



There still remains a portion of the Archipelago which holds no intercourse with Singapore, and which would not come under the influence of a settlement in North Australia.

My arrival in the Archipelago; and during my stay there I lost no opportunity of gaining information concerning it and the countries adjacent. Many of the most intelligent and influential Chinese merchants of Singapore, and, I may add, *all* the Bugis who are in the habit of visiting that part of the Australian coast, entertain very high notions of its commercial capabilities, and when speaking of our late settlement at Raffles' Bay, invariably allude to it as a spot, which, had it been retained by the British, must soon have become another Singapore. Since my return to England, I have endeavoured, as much as lay in my power, to direct the attention of government to the subject, and with this view I published a statement of the capabilities of the part in question, in the early part of 1836, and although it has not had the desired effect, still I do not despair. The chief obstacle appears to be the fact of two settlements having been formed there by the British, and afterwards abandoned.

In the year 1824, a ship of war and several transports were despatched from Sydney, conveying a party of troops, and a number of convicts, to form an establishment on the north coast of Australia, for the purpose, it is said, of opening a commercial intercourse with the Bugis, or, as they were called, the Malays, who annually visit the coast. The settlement was formed in a narrow and intricate strait, which divides Melville from Bathurst Island, a part which was carefully avoided by the Bugis on account of the extreme danger of the navigation, and for the same reason it was also avoided by the British merchant vessels which passed through Torres Straits. The unfavourable nature of its position soon became obvious, and another settlement was formed at Raffles' Bay, in 1827, a spot evidently well adapted for the purpose, and Melville Island was soon afterwards abandoned. The Raffles' Bay settlement proved more prosperous than could be expected, when it is considered that the population was entirely composed of troops and convicts, not a single individual acquainted with the Archipelago, or with the language and habits of the natives, being attached to it: indeed so little was known respecting tropical agriculture, that it is a well ascertained fact that clean rice, which had probably also been kiln-dried, was put into the ground for seed at Melville Island, which, to the great surprise of the cultivator, did not come up. The Bugis trepang fishers from Macassar discovered the settlers at Raffles' Bay soon after their arrival, but, as I was personally informed by one of the Bugis Nakodahs, his countrymen were rather suspicious of them, as they could not discover their object in settling there. The following season, however, the Bugis gained confidence, and several of the prahus remained at the settlement to fish for trepang, instead of proceeding further along the coast. The Bugis were induced by



lia ; namely, the countries in the vicinity of the Mindoro, or Sulu Sea. These comprise the rich and extensive islands of Magindano and Palawan, the Sulu group, and the north and north-eastern parts of Borneo ; and as the remarks to be found in a preceding chapter, on the commercial resources

the representations of the commandant to bring with them the next season articles produced in the Archipelago, to barter with the British, and many also brought their families with them in the intention of settling, but on their arrival at Raffles' Bay, they found, to their great loss and disappointment, that the place had been abandoned during their absence. Orders had been received from the Colonial office in London to that effect, and these were issued under the supposition that no intercourse had been opened with the natives of the Archipelago ; that the climate was unhealthy, and that the natives were hostile. All these opinions were incorrect, for not only had an intercourse been opened with the Bugis, but the climate had been proved to be remarkably healthy, and the natives had long been on the most friendly terms with the settlers.

It is, however, a fortunate circumstance that these settlements were totally abandoned, otherwise a host of run-away convicts would have carried the " British name and reputation " into the innermost recesses of the Archipelago. England will have much to do for the natives of this part of the world before she can counterbalance the misery inflicted on them by introducing a moral pest, a horde of Satan's missionaries among them. Wherever these remorseless wretches have set their feet, some act of atrocity has driven the natives to hate the face of a white man, and thus they are debarred from receiving the improvement which our superior knowledge would enable us to bestow. Nor have they alone been sufferers, for we ourselves have felt most severely the effects of these disastrous circumstances. Captain Barker, the humane commandant of Raffles' Bay, was murdered on the south coast of Australia, by a tribe of the aborigines, who had been driven to desperation by the atrocious cruelties of a party of run-away convicts from Van Diemen's Land, who resided in an island near the coast, and who were in the habit of visiting the main land for the purpose of carrying off the native women, and of shooting the men who endeavoured to defend them. Several other cases of the like description have happened more recently ; and instances have occurred in which the entire crews of ships have been cut off by natives, whose enmity has been raised by similar causes. This infliction is not confined to Australia, for individuals of the same class are scattered all over India. A renegade Englishman in the service of the king of Achen, an escaped felon from New South Wales, commanded the Achenese piratical vessel which fired into an English ship on the coast of Sumatra—a case which has been previously mentioned.



of the latter country, are equally applicable to the others, it will not be necessary to repeat them here. The productions of this part of the Archipelago were formerly deemed of so much importance that the East-India Company formed a settlement on Balambangan, an island near the north end of Borneo; but, unfortunately for the success of the expedition, Mr. Dalrymple, who had proposed it, and who was well acquainted with the native character, was not attached to the enterprize, and in consequence of some impolitic measures on the part of the British, the Sulus commenced hostilities against them, and the colonists, apparently glad of an excuse for doing so, abandoned the settlement. Had the project succeeded, the resources of Borneo, that mine of riches, would have soon been made available for commercial purposes. A trade was kept up by the British with the Sulu Islands for several years after this occurrence, which subsequently flagged, and at length totally ceased. The cause of this failure will be obvious, when it is considered that these important islands have not been visited by a British man-of-war for more than twenty years.\* Large bodies of Cochin Chinese have recently emigrated to Palawan, the north-end of Borneo, and to many of the neighbouring islands, so that these countries have received an accession of population of the most valuable description: for the Cochin Chinese are scarcely inferior to the Chinese themselves in agricultural skill and enterprize, while in moral character and conduct they are greatly their superiors. The advantages which this country would derive by inducing settlers of so industrious a description to produce arti-

\* A small Spanish brig from Manilla, owned and commanded by an American, touched at the Sulus in 1834, and brought a valuable cargo of pearl shell to Singapore. She made the same voyage again the following year; thus we must suppose that traders are now protected there by the native government.



cles which they could exchange for our manufactures, are too obvious to require comment.

My observations on the commerce of the East-Indian Archipelago are necessarily brief, but they will, I trust, attract some attention to the subject. Great Britain, by extending her commerce in these rich and fertile countries, would not only improve her own resources, but would also materially assist the natives in their attempts to rise from their present miserable condition. The pernicious influence exercised by that European power, which has so long kept numerous nations belonging to one of the very finest portions of the globe in a state of moral and political degradation, is rapidly disappearing. The commercial spirit, and desire for improvement, manifested by natives of all denominations, aided by a well-established intercourse with an European nation, entertaining no illiberal desire to keep them in a state of ignorance and perpetual warfare, would soon work an extraordinary and most beneficial change. My own observation and experience justify my asserting my full conviction, that, under favourable circumstances, the natives of the Indian Archipelago would speedily attain a degree of civilisation, which would prove their natural intellectual powers to be at least equal to those of the individuals who gratuitously endeavour to represent them in the character of an inferior order of beings.

[While the present work was going through the press, a volume has appeared in which similar opinions to my own respecting the colonization of North Australia, have been taken up. The author of the publication in question "Transportation and Colonization," differs, however, from the views which I have adopted in one very essential particular, for he earnestly recommends the formation of a "distinct penal colony" at Port Essington. In my opinion,



so far from meriting an earnest recommendation, such a system is most earnestly to be deprecated, as one fraught with destruction to every hope of prosperity for the settlement, and as a preposterous act of wickedness, since no advantage, either present or prospective, could possibly accrue from it. The establishment of convicts in the colony would deter many natives from settling, for the Chinese do not entertain a high opinion of the "Thiefo Country," as they call New South Wales, or place much confidence in those whom they know to have resided in it. Were we, therefore, to people the new colony with felons, for the sake of our national credit, it would be our best policy to endeavour to keep the Chinese and all other native traders and settlers away, since their respect for the British, whom they have been accustomed to look upon as beings of a superior grade, would be grievously lessened were they to see them working in chains like beasts. Had the reverend author been acquainted with the part of the world of which he was treating, he would have been aware that no penal settlement could possibly exist in it, unless the convicts should be chained to the trees. Were they to be allowed the least liberty, they would escape into the bush, in small parties, and make their way to some unfrequented part of the coast, where they might easily build a canoe sufficiently seaworthy to carry them over the smooth seas of the Archipelago, while the turtle which abound on the coast, and which will exist for weeks, indeed months, without food, would furnish them with provisions for the voyage. Should the runaways be home-sick, they would shape their course for one of the European settlements in the Archipelago, and by representing themselves as shipwrecked mariners, be forwarded home; or otherwise they would lie in wait in the straits frequented by ships,



until picked up by one of them. Should they be enterprising, however, they would push for one of the unfrequented islands, Timor Laut, for example, which is only one day's sail from the coast, where, to judge from circumstances which have already occurred, they would be well received. They might easily take advantage of the adventurous spirit of the natives, to induce them to turn pirates, who, from the skill of their European allies, would become sufficiently formidable to destroy the native trade of the settlement, supposing that any existed, were it a penal colony. There would certainly be some danger attending their escape from the chain gangs, but this would not deter them, for we have instances of convicts in the penal settlements in New South Wales having murdered others, merely that they might be sent to the capital, and there enjoy a few weeks among their former associates previous to their execution. I trust that the British government will never be so devoid of all Christian feeling as to form a convict settlement in the Archipelago. The natives have not injured us, why, therefore, should we impose so dreadful an infliction upon them ?]

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OBSERVATIONS ON THE UNEXPLORED PARTS OF NORTH  
AND NORTH-WESTERN AUSTRALIA.

Observations relating to Australia may appear out of place in a work professedly devoted to the Indian Archipelago, but in reality they are not irrelevant; since, at some future period, both countries will be intimately connected with each other. That European power, whatever it may be, which shall possess extensive colonies in North and North-western



Australia, must necessarily exercise a paramount influence over all the countries in the Eastern seas. It is, however, very evident, that the British Government has not hithertaken this view of the subject, for, while money and human life have been lavishly expended in surveying the shores of the Arctic regions, we have been contented with a very superficial examination of the coasts of a continent, which a little attention on the part of Government would render a vast British colony. When the northern coasts of Australia shall be better known, their advantageous position will become more apparent, and it is with a view to direct attention to a part of the world hitherto deemed of little importance, that I insert the following remarks. The opinions here given, (which certainly differ materially from those promulgated by several geographers,) are not hastily formed, for the geography of Australia has long been one of my favourite studies; and I have been enabled to bring some degree of personal experience, to bear out my views, for, during a residence of two years and a-half in various parts of Western Australia, I was often engaged in marine excursions, and have traced more than two hundred miles of coast-line in an open boat. This, together with the experience I gained during my subsequent voyaging in the Indian Archipelago, has enabled me to discover many important points in the narratives of voyagers and travellers in Australia, which a reader not possessed of the like advantages might have passed unnoticed.

During my voyages in the Indian Archipelago, I have invariably remarked that there was a perfect uniformity in all those parts of the coasts which possessed similar geographical features, whether navigable rivers, shallow creeks, or straits which afforded communication between seas; and there does not appear to be any reason why this resemblance



should not extend, at least, to that portion of the coast of Australia which has the same climate, is under the influence of the same winds, and which may be considered as a portion of the same country.

One of the spots which may be deemed of great interest, the bottom of the Gulf of Carpentaria, was visited by Flinders, but circumstances prevented him from examining it accurately; and his observations, instead of showing that no large river can exist there, tend greatly to prove the contrary. I allude more particularly to that part of the bight situated between the meridians of  $140^{\circ} 4' \text{ E.}$  and  $140^{\circ} 20' \text{ E.}$ , the coast line of which is marked in the large chart as not distinctly seen. Concerning this part Flinders states, (vol. ii. p. 133) "there was a bight falling back as far as lat.  $17^{\circ} 42'$ , and perhaps further, which appeared to be the southern extremity of the Gulf of Carpentaria, for the coast from thence took a direction to the northward of west."

Flinders was prevented from approaching the land hereabouts, sufficiently near to gain a distinct view of the shore, by a bank of *mud*, extending out to seaward, on which he had soundings of two and a half fathoms. Now the mouths of all the large rivers in the intertropical parts of Eastern Asia are precisely similarly situated, and the larger the river the more extensive will be the mud bank.

The best example will be the Meinam river, at the bottom of the Gulf of Siam. The gulfs of Siam and of Carpentaria bear a great resemblance to each other, not only in the form of their coast lines, but also in their geographical positions. One is situated to the northward and the other to the southward of the Line, but both are near the same parallel of latitude, and both face towards the Equinoctial.



In 1833, I visited the Meinam river, and we were forced to anchor about eight miles from the nearest land, in two and a half fathoms water, whence the low land near the mouth of the river was scarcely visible. I feel confidence in asserting that had Flinders coasted along the edge of the mud bank at the head of the Siamese gulf, in the same manner as he coasted that at the head of the Gulf of Carpentaria, he would have passed without discovering the Meinam river, although it is one of the largest in Eastern Asia. I am far from wishing to infer that that able navigator was guilty of any neglect, for he must have possessed great perseverance to have accomplished what he did, with so unseaworthy a vessel.

We have a proof of the facility with which a large river may be overlooked, in the futility of many of the attempts to find the mouth of the Brisbane river in New South Wales, although it had previously been discovered by a shipwrecked boatman.

If there is no large river in the Gulf of Carpentaria, what is to become of the rains which fall during the N.W. monsoon? The theory of absorbing marshes in the interior of Australia, has been exploded by recent expeditions. Desert sands may now be held up as an absorbing medium, but although the coasts of Carpentaria are sandy, we must not conclude thence that the interior is sandy also.

Another spot, which may be deemed of far greater interest, is the large opening behind Buccaneer's Archipelago, on the north-west coast (lat.  $16\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$  S. long.  $123^{\circ}$  E.), which was penetrated by Captain King about thirty miles, whence no land was to be seen to the southward.\* One point in which

\* In King's Australia (vol. ii. p. 351) it is stated that "between the bearings of E.N.E. and S.S.E. a slight glimmering of land was raised above the horizon by the effects of refraction." Those, however, who have witnessed the strange delusions caused by *mirage* on the coasts of Australia



this part of the coast differs from all the adjacent countries, is in the extraordinary height to which the tide rises—thirty-seven feet; while that in the Gulf of Carpentaria rises only ten feet, and that of the south-east and west coasts scarcely more than three or four. This immense rise of tide can only, I think, be accounted for on the supposition that it is occasioned by a strong rush of water from an inland sea meeting the flood-tide from the Indian ocean, and a comparison between this part of Australia and parts of Eastern Asia in a measure similarly situated, will tend to confirm this hypothesis.

The rise of tide on the open parts of the coasts of the adjacent countries, even near the mouths of the large rivers in Borneo and Siam, rarely exceeds ten feet; while in the straits which afford communication between two seas, in the Straits of Singapore, for example, particularly where the channel is interrupted by rocky islands, the tide rushes with great rapidity, and rises to the height of nearly twenty feet. This increase in the rise is caused by the flood-tide from the China sea meeting that from the Bay of Bengal. The meeting of the tides, however, which takes place between Singapore and Malacca, does not immediately stop the strength of the currents, for the stronger overcomes the other and rushes over the top of it, while the weaker still continues its course as an under current. This strife always causes strong swells and breakers, similar, but apparently

must be aware that the appearance of land is not always to be trusted to, even when it appears so palpable that rocks and trees can be distinguished upon it. That which is called by Captain King "a slight glimmering of land," is introduced into his plan of Buccaneer's Archipelago as "*banks of land raised by refraction*," and in the general chart of Australia issued from the Hydrographical office, it is magnified still more into "*distant land was seen in this direction*." This would lead to the supposition that land had actually been seen there, which is contrary to fact.



not so dangerous as those experienced by Captain King near Cape Leveque, at the entrance of the opening.

It does not appear probable that this opening can be merely the embouchure of a large river (a supposition entertained by some authors who have treated of this part), for it totally differs in every particular from the mouths of all those situated in the inter-tropical parts of Eastern Asia. Were the rise of the tide caused by a body of water poured out by a mighty river, it is not to be expected that the flood-tide could be so strong as the ebb, which was found to be the case by Captain King. There was an instance a few years ago, of the waters near the mouths of the Ganges rising to an equal height, but it was caused by a hurricane in the Bay of Bengal, obstructing the progress of the stream. This could not have been the case at Buccaneer's Archipelago, as the winds at that part, throughout the year, blow chiefly off the land.

The waters of many large rivers in India (of the Indus, for example) rise to an immense height during the rainy seasons, but this takes place generally far from the mouths, where the channels are so contracted as not to afford sufficient space to carry off the water brought down by the mountain torrents.

The winds experienced by Captain King during the period in which he remained in this opening, tend to corroborate the above supposition. He states (vol. ii. p. 206), "We remained at the anchorage in Goodenough Bay until the following morning, when we weighed with a light breeze from south-east, the only direction from which we experienced any wind; the breeze generally blew strong at night, whilst during the day it was light, or nearly calm." This remark might readily be overlooked as one of little moment, but it is, in fact, of the utmost importance. Those



acquainted with the theory of land and sea breezes in inter-tropical countries, must be aware that the sea breeze during the day is strong, whilst in the night the breeze from the land is generally light, and often there is no wind at all ; in fact, this is the case in every other part of the north and north-west coasts of Australia. Such an entire difference in the winds of this particular spot would appear most extraordinary, were the coast line here continued, but should it be the entrance of an inland sea, the fact may be accounted for with the greatest facility.

In the first place, there would be no land to the southward through the medium of which the air would be sufficiently heated to require a current from the sea, and thereby create a sea-breeze. Again, the greater portion of this inland ocean would be within the influence of the south-east "trade wind ;" but during the day, the cold air from its surface would be required to fill up the vacuum caused by the rarefaction of the air over its heated shores ; and therefore the "trade wind" would then be held in suspension. In the night, however, when the land had become cooled, the breeze from the sea would no longer be required ; the south-east "trade wind" would then be permitted to blow, and it would of course be felt in the opening. Thus and thus only, I think, can the total change which Captain King experienced in the prevailing winds of this particular part of the coast, be accounted for.\*

These circumstances lead me to conclude, that a body of water of great extent exists within the opening behind Buc-

\* The preceding remarks on the gulf of Carpentaria and Buccaneers' Archipelago, were read before the Geographical Society in February 1837, and as papers of a purely theoretical nature are not published in the Society's transactions, the Secretary was kind enough to return them to me. Circumstances induced me subsequently to make further inquiries into the subject, the results of which will be given in the ensuing pages.



caneers' Archipelago, and I will now endeavour to show that there is at least a reasonable probability of this inland sea occupying a vast portion of the interior of Australia. In a work entitled, "Observations on the Colonies of New South Wales and Van Diemen's Land," by Dr. Henderson, published at Calcutta in 1832, I find the following extract:

"I had at this time some favourable opportunities of communicating with the natives in the vicinity, and understood from them that they believed in the existence of a large inland sea, lying directly west, at a distance of ten days' journey, or two hundred miles, from Wellington Valley. They stated, on the authority of a westerly tribe, that the opposite shore was not visible, nor did they conceive that any other land was to be found by crossing over in that direction. Upon the banks of this lake or inland sea, animals of a large and fearful size were said to be met with, congregating in herds; but it did not distinctly appear that they were considered to be carnivorous. I was induced to give some degree of credit to this account, from observing the general correctness of the statements of the natives, when these related to local circumstances, and likewise because it was in this instance corroborated by the geological structure of the country as far as opportunities had been afforded me of observation. The stratum had evidently begun to decline to the westward and southward, and had assimilated more with clay; the country had become swampy, and the soil had received into its composition a larger proportion of saline particles."—(Page 8 of the Preface.)

So convinced was Dr. Henderson of the correctness of the statements of the natives, that he offered to fit out an expedition into the interior at his own expense, provided the Sydney Government would supply him with a boat and a few convicts. So moderate a request was, however, refused; and



he is not the only private individual who has met with the like success in a similar application. This gentleman supposed the animals, which were described as congregating on the shores of the inland sea, to be a new species of hippopotamus; but by the following extract from a Sydney Journal, quoted in Lieut. Breton's "New South Wales," it would appear that whales will best answer the description given by the natives. Their statements as to the existence of these animals, induced many individuals in Sydney to treat the whole as a fable, but, as will be shown hereafter, it forms a very strong proof of their correctness.

"The tribes who occupy the country, two or three days' journey from Wellington Valley, have been engaged in war several years with the tribes living west and north-west, but, owing to the death of one of the chiefs, peace has been at length restored between them, and these *mial* or strange blacks, have related to their new friends, and these to us, that there exists in the *western* country, many days off, a vast interior sea, where the water is salt, and where *whales are seen to spout*! The manner in which they imitated the whale throwing up water was so completely satisfactory as to leave little doubt of the fact, as it is not likely these inland blacks could have known it but from actual observation. Here, then, is a problem that will repay the working, and the sooner we are relieved from the present state of suspense arising from such a report, the better."—(Breton's New South Wales, 2d edition, p. 139.)\*

\* Lieut. Breton quotes this paragraph "just to show with what facility marvellous stories are snatched up and circulated by those who do not take time to consider." He is of opinion that no such sea exists, but I must confess that I do not clearly comprehend the argument which he adduces to support it. "By making a fair calculation, the 'great sea' ought to be nearly about the centre of the island, so that the 'great fish' must have had to travel up a 'great river' to a distance of some one thousand two



By recent accounts from Swan River, it appears that *there* also the natives distinctly state, on personal knowledge, that there exists, nine or ten days' journey from the back settlements of the British, or about three hundred miles from the coast, a sea of salt water, out of which the sun rises, and which they believe to be the eastern boundary of their country. They even state the names of the resting places, and of the spots where water will be found on the journey there. Some letters from Mr. Moore, the Advocate-General at Swan River, containing this information, and the manner in which it was obtained from the natives, have been published by his friends in Dublin, and they also state that he proposed setting out in search of the sea in September last.

Should the reports of the natives of New South Wales, and of Western Australia, respecting the existence of a sea, inland of their respective countries, be correct, its southern shores must approach somewhat near to the head of the Great Australian Bight. No one has yet landed on this part of the south coast of Australia; but the shores of the Bight were coasted by the *Investigator*, and it is not a little extraordinary that Captain Flinders, who, from all accounts, was by no means addicted to building theories on unsound foundations, was inclined to think that the level bank, which he found extending along the south coast of Australia, for one hundred and forty-five leagues, which differed totally in appearance and character from every other known coast of the island, forms a barrier between "an interior and the exterior sea." I will here give Captain Flinders' own words:

hundred miles from the coast! But the 'great drought' seems to have dried up the first, for it has disappeared, and the whales with it; so that the above writer need not be 'in a state of suspense.'"



“The height of this extraordinary bank is nearly the same throughout, being no where less, by estimation, than four hundred, nor any where more than six hundred feet. In the first twenty leagues, the ragged tops of some inland mountains were visible over it; but during the remainder of its long course, the bank was the limit of our view.

“The equality of the elevation for so great an extent, and the evidently calcareous nature of the bank, at least in the upper two hundred feet, would bespeak it to have been the exterior line of a vast coral reef, which is always more elevated than the interior parts, and commonly level with high water-mark. From the gradual subsiding of the sea, or perhaps by a sudden convulsion of nature, this bank may have attained its present height above the surface; and however extraordinary such a change may appear, yet, when it is recollected that branches of coral still exist upon Bold-head, at the elevation of four hundred or more feet, this supposition assumes a great degree of probability; and it would further seem, that the subsiding of the waters has not been at a period very remote, since these frail branches have yet neither been all beaten down, nor mouldered away by the wind and weather.

“If this supposition be well founded, it may, with the fact of no hill or other object having been perceived above the bank in the greater part of its course, assist in forming some conjecture of what may be within it; which cannot, as I judge in such case, be other than flat sandy plains or water. The bank may even be a narrow barrier between an interior and the exterior sea, and much do I regret not having formed an idea of this probability at the time; for notwithstanding the great difficulty and risk, I should certainly have attempted a landing upon some part of the coast, to ascer-



tain a fact of so much importance." (Flinders' *Terra Australis*, vol. i. p. 97.)

We have thus evidences of the probability of an inland sea on four sides, on all sides indeed, where any opportunities have presented themselves for obtaining information:—the extraordinary rise of tides and other peculiarities near the wide opening on the north-west coast, the appearance of the land on the south coast, and the evidence of the natives in parts which have not been visited by us. Some persons, I find, doubt the veracity of the natives, but all those who have had much intercourse with them, will, I am convinced, be inclined to give some credence to their statements. The assertion of the Sydney natives, as to the existence of whales in the inland sea which they describe, has also induced many individuals in that colony to disbelieve their reports, but it is not a little extraordinary that, should this sea communicate with the main ocean by means of a navigable channel, according to the known habits of whales, it must be much frequented by them during certain periods of the year.

In the season of parturition, which is from May to August (the winter months in the southern hemisphere) the whales resort in numbers to the southern and eastern coasts of the countries between the parallels of  $25^{\circ}$  and  $40^{\circ}$  S. They are inclined to avoid the western coasts, as they might be driven on shore by the westerly gales which then prevail in the southern hemisphere. They require spots sheltered from the swell of the sea, where they can lie with their noses above water on a steep sandy beach, on which there is no danger of being stranded, as that would be the case were the beach sloping gradually. It is also necessary that the rise and fall of tides should not be very great. The places in the southern hemisphere which possess all these qualifica-



tions, are not very numerous. They include some parts of the east coast of South America; Simon's Bay, Algoa Bay, and Port Natal, in southern Africa; parts of Van Diemen's Land, and New South Wales; and Port Philip, Spencer's Gulf, King George's Sound, and Port Augusta, on the south coast of Australia. Being very timid in their natures, the whales have been driven away in a great measure from most of these places, and they consequently resort in greater numbers to those spots where they have hitherto been unmolested. Port Augusta is one of these spots, and I do not exaggerate when I say that several thousand of these animals, chiefly of the species called "Fin Backs," visited Port Augusta to bring forth their young during the winter of 1831. The beach at the head of the bay was, for nearly four months, particularly during the month of July, constantly occupied, sometimes by thirty or forty at a time, and others at the same time would be cruising about the bay, ready to take their places. Should the inland sea described by the natives of Australia exist, part of it must be without the tropics, and should it communicate with the Indian ocean by a navigable strait on the N. W. coast, there can be little doubt but numbers of whales would resort to so convenient a place during the season of parturition. It is well known that whales possess the faculty (instinct, I believe it is called) of finding their way in and out of very intricate places, as in the deep inlets on the coasts of North America, and also of finding their way back to places which they have previously visited. Now we have conclusive evidence that during what is called the "calving season," whales *do* visit that particular spot on the N. W. coast of Australia, where a deep inlet was entered by King, and whence "no land was seen to the southward," namely Buccaneer's Archipelago. In the month of August 1821,



King saw a number of "Fin Backs" near the entrance of the inlet, which he did not then enter (vol. ii. page 82), and the French navigators named a bank near Buccaneer's Archipelago, "Banque des Baleines," from the number of whales which they saw there. It is remarkable that this is the only part of the coast in which whales were seen by King; neither, I believe, did Flinders meet with any in the Gulf of Carpentaria. From personal experience I may venture to assert that they are rarely if ever to be met with in the seas of the Indian Archipelago, for neither the climate nor the marine productions are suited to them. It is pretty well known, also, that they do not obtain food on the coasts of Australia, but are supported by their blubber, which has been supplied them by nature for the purpose, therefore they can only visit the N. W. coast of Australia, for the purpose of bringing forth their young. Now I will appeal to any one who is acquainted with the habits of whales, whether it is possible for them to do this where the tides rise thirty-seven feet as on that coast, or even half that height. Neither is the climate nor the nature of the N. W. coast adapted to their purpose, therefore it is natural to suppose that, through the inlet near which they are found in such numbers, they penetrate to a sea where they find all the convenience they require. We have further evidence of their only visiting this part to bring forth their young, for when King entered the inlet in February 1822, the season in which the whales resort to high latitudes, none were to be seen.

I could give much further evidence on this point, but I think that which I have already offered will show that there is at least a reasonable probability of a vast mediterranean sea existing in the interior of Australia, which communicates with the main ocean, by a strait only three hundred



and fifty miles from the southernmost islands of the Indian Archipelago. The shores of this sea, from the smoothness of the water, and the consequent accessibility of all parts of the coast, would present a field for European colonization unequalled in any known part of the world, and it should be an object of the British to take possession of them, were it merely to prevent any foreign nation from posting themselves at the back of the Settlements which we already possess in Australia. This point will perhaps soon be cleared up, for a ship is now fitting out in this country to examine the coasts of Australia, but should she proceed in the first place to Bass's Straits, two years would elapse before she would arrive on the N. W. coast. An expedition for discovery is also fitting out in France, and the overflow of malefactors in that country, together with other circumstances, render it extremely probable that the chief object of the expedition consists in the selection of a spot for the purpose of forming a penal settlement, and that the N. and N. W. coasts of Australia will be examined with this view. It is to be hoped that the project will be thwarted, sufficient sin and misery having already been created by Britain vomiting forth her outcasts to people a country well deserving of a better system of colonization.

THE END.

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Printed by J. L. Cox and Sons, 75, Great Queen Street,  
Lincoln's-Inn Fields.































Earl, George W.

The Eastern Seas, or voyages and adventures in the Indian Archipelago

London 1837

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